

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN THEOLOGY  
NORTHWESTERN CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY, USA

**Research Topic**

"Sustaining Relevance: Strategies for Engaging Churchgoers in Meaningful Church Activities and Encouraging Ongoing Commitment to Church Ministry."

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## **Abstract**

This study emerges amidst concerns of diminishing engagement and commitment within church communities, addressing a critical need for sustaining the relevance of church activities in the lives of churchgoers. The primary aim is to identify and analyze effective engagement strategies that encompass worship services, social events, and community outreach programs. Using a quantitative methodology, the research employed survey questionnaires to assess the impact of such strategies on the perceived relevance of church activities and their contribution to the individual's faith journey.

Further, the study examines the commitment level of churchgoers to active ministry roles and responsibilities, exploring the reciprocal influence between personal spiritual growth and church engagement. This comprehensive approach enables a holistic understanding of faith continuity and integration, shedding light on the intertwined nature of church relevance and individual commitment.

Based on the findings, the research offers practical recommendations and guidelines for churches and religious communities. These insights aim to assist religious institutions in fostering deeper commitment among their members and maintaining the relevance of their activities in an ever-evolving religious landscape. In conclusion, this study not only contributes to academic discussions on church engagement but also serves as a valuable resource for religious communities striving to cultivate meaningful participation and commitment among their congregations.

**Keywords:** Church Engagement, Faith Integration, Spiritual Growth, Church Relevance, Ministry Commitment, Religious Communities, Engagement Strategies



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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Background of Study

The church, since its inception, has been more than a mere place of worship. It has represented a community, a sanctuary for spiritual exploration, and a platform for social involvement (Johnson, 2023). Throughout history, these religious institutions have been the fulcrum of spiritual, moral, and often, societal guidance. Their multifarious roles extend from offering a space for personal solace to creating a sense of communal belonging. However, as we progress through the 21st century, there are palpable concerns regarding the waning engagement and dwindling commitment of churchgoers. This evolving scenario brings to the fore crucial questions about the roles and relevance of churches in modern society.

Historically, the very essence of churches thrived on the collective involvement of its members. This wasn't a mere gathering of individuals but was underscored by a profound connection that churchgoers felt with their faith and the encompassing community (Sackitey, et al., 2023). It was not uncommon for individuals to actively participate in various religious undertakings, from attending weekly services to volunteering for outreach programs. Such active participation often stemmed from an intrinsic motivation, borne out of a sense of spiritual fulfillment and a desire to be part of something larger.



However, the contemporary zeitgeist presents a somewhat contrasting picture. The onset of rapid technological advancements, paradigm shifts in societal values, and a pervasive sense of individualism have sculpted a new set of challenges for religious institutions. Churches, in many parts of the world, now grapple with the daunting task of maintaining their relevance among congregants, especially younger generations who are increasingly exposed to a multitude of worldviews and ideologies (Kinnaman & Hawkins, 2011).

The discourse on the relevance of church activities is layered and intricate. It is not merely about contemporizing activities to align with modern sensibilities. Instead, the crux lies in ensuring that these activities genuinely resonate with the spiritual and emotional needs of the members. A youth-centric service might incorporate contemporary music and technology, but the true metric of its success hinges on whether it fosters genuine spiritual contemplation and connection (Jones, 2001).

Beyond worship services, the numerous community outreach initiatives and social events orchestrated by churches play an indomitable role in engendering a sense of purpose and community among members. These initiatives often serve dual purposes: they provide an avenue for members to manifest their faith in tangible actions, and they fortify the church's position as a beacon of hope and service in the broader community (Unruh & Sider, 2005). Yet, the efficacy of such initiatives is directly proportionate to their alignment with the needs of the community they serve. A discordance between the two can inadvertently result in

dwindling participation, which may be symptomatic of a broader malaise of diminishing commitment to church-centric activities.

Delving deeper, the exploration of an individual's commitment to active ministry roles in the church becomes paramount. Such roles, traditionally reserved for the deeply devout, now need to be examined in the light of contemporary motivations and deterrents. The nuances of why certain individuals ardently embrace these roles, while others remain reticent, can offer profound insights into the dynamics of modern church engagement.

An equally pivotal dimension to consider is the intricate dance between an individual's personal spiritual trajectory and their engagement with the church. One's spiritual evolution is inherently personal, yet it is invariably intertwined with their experiences within the religious community. The church's capacity to either catalyze or stymie this spiritual journey, based on the relevance of its activities, is a topic of paramount importance.

In this evolving religious milieu, there exists an unequivocal need to holistically address these shifts. By comprehensively analyzing strategies that can bolster church relevance and subsequently enhance commitment, religious institutions can rejuvenate their pivotal role in individuals' lives. Through a keen understanding of contemporary sensibilities, churches can adeptly tailor their activities, ensuring they remain meaningful touchpoints in an individual's spiritual journey.

In essence, the challenge before religious institutions is multifaceted and complex. Yet, it offers an opportunity – to introspect, innovate, and reinvigorate. As the global religious landscape continues its metamorphosis, it becomes incumbent upon churches to remain responsive, ensuring their continued significance as pillars of faith, community, and spiritual refuge.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

The essence of the modern church extends beyond its role as a mere physical space or an institution. It serves as a communal hub, a place of solace, and a source of spiritual guidance, knitting together individuals from diverse walks of life (Connolly, 2010). However, a subtle, yet profound shift is being observed in the relationship between churches and their congregations. This metamorphosis, largely influenced by societal advancements and changing cultural norms, calls into question the traditional modalities through which churches have sought to engage their followers. There emerges a critical need to explore, understand, and address this evolving dynamic, ensuring that churches can sustain their relevance while fostering meaningful engagement and commitment among their members.

This pertinence of church activities and the commitment of churchgoers to church ministries cannot be taken for granted in the contemporary landscape marked by a cornucopia of competing interests and relentless distractions. The digital age, with its incessant flow of information and alternative means of socialization, presents a formidable challenge to traditional religious institutions.





Individuals, especially the youth, are finding new avenues for community, often outside the walls of traditional establishments like the church (Woodhead, Partridge & Kawanami, 2003). Consequently, there is an observable drift among churchgoers, who increasingly view church services and programs as optional, lacking direct impact on their daily lives and spiritual journeys.

Moreover, the notion of community service and social events, once a bastion of church activities, now contends with the varied interpretations of 'service' and 'community' by the modern populace. There's a growing sentiment that traditional church-organized activities are somewhat out of sync with the contemporary narrative of social engagement, which increasingly values immediacy, autonomy, and digital connectivity. This perceived disconnect underscores the necessity to reevaluate and innovate the ways in which churches plan and promote their activities (Whiteman, 2023).

In parallel, the concept of active ministry—once considered a natural pathway for the devout—is experiencing a decline in enthusiastic participation. This trend suggests not just a waning interest in structured religious involvement but potentially deeper issues relating to personal spiritual growth and the perceived efficacy of the church in nurturing this development. It is pivotal to discern whether this is a byproduct of the evolving societal norms or if the church's approach to ministry and member responsibilities needs a more fundamental reassessment and recalibration.

Integral to these observations is the realization that personal faith and spiritual growth do not exist in isolation—they are symbiotically linked to the larger ecosystem of church engagement and community participation. A nuanced understanding is required to decode how these individual journeys of faith are intertwined with perceptions of church relevance and the nature of church activities. The dialogue between personal spiritual narratives and communal religious experiences is complex, warranting a thorough, empathetic exploration to unearth the factors that nourish or impede a harmonious spiritual ecosystem.

In essence, this research is not a mere academic exercise; it is a clarion call for adaptive change. The goal is to ensure that churches remain robust, vibrant epicenters of spiritual growth and community bonding, capable of evolving gracefully with the times while staying true to their core mission. The stakes are high, but so are the potential rewards—a reinvigorated church community that is deeply engaged, committed, and reflective of the rich tapestry of modern society.

### 1.3 Research Questions

From the problem statement above, the research questions can for the study above are:

1. What specific strategies are most effective in engaging churchgoers in worship services, social events, and community outreach programs within contemporary church settings?

2. How do specific engagement strategies influence the perceived relevance of church activities, and in what ways do these activities further enhance churchgoers' faith journey?
3. To what extent are churchgoers committed to active roles and responsibilities within church ministries, and how does this commitment vary among different church communities?
4. How does personal spiritual growth correlate with levels of church engagement, and how do these engagements shape the perceived relevance and commitment to ministry among churchgoers?
5. Based on empirical evidence, what recommendations can be proposed to churches and religious communities to ensure sustained relevance and deepen the commitment of their members?

#### 1.4 Research Objectives

1. Identify Effective Engagement Strategies: To analyze and identify strategies that effectively engage churchgoers in various church activities, including worship services, social events, and community outreach programs.

2. **Assess Impact on Relevance:** To assess the impact of these engagement strategies on the perceived relevance of church activities in the lives of churchgoers, with a focus on how these activities contribute to their faith journey.
3. **Examine Commitment to Ministry:** To examine the level of commitment churchgoers have toward active participation in church ministry roles and responsibilities.
4. **Understand Faith Integration:** To understand how personal spiritual growth is influenced by and, in turn, influences church engagement, relevance, and commitment to ministry, creating a holistic view of faith continuity.
5. **Develop Practical Recommendations:** To develop practical recommendations and guidelines for churches and religious communities based on the findings, aiding them in sustaining relevance and fostering a deeper commitment among their members.

These objectives will guide the research in exploring the strategies and factors involved in maintaining relevance and commitment within church activities and ministry roles.

## 1.5 Significance of Study

The vitality and sustainability of religious institutions, particularly churches, are intricately tied to the engagement and commitment of their congregants. The ebb and flow of societal trends, technological advancements, and shifting cultural

landscapes frequently challenge religious institutions, urging them to reevaluate their strategies to remain relevant and appealing to their communities (Iannaccone, 1992). In such a dynamic environment, the study titled "Sustaining Relevance: Strategies for Engaging Churchgoers in Meaningful Church Activities and Encouraging Ongoing Commitment to Church Ministry" holds profound significance for a myriad of reasons.

Foremost, this research embarks on the crucial task of understanding the varied strategies employed by churches to captivate and sustain the interest of their congregants. In times where numerous distractions and alternatives exist, ensuring the congregation finds meaning and value in church activities is paramount. By discerning which engagement strategies are most efficacious, religious institutions can recalibrate their approaches, ensuring they harness practices that resonate most with their congregants.

Moreover, assessing the impact of these strategies on the perceived relevance of church activities provides an essential barometer for churches. The very essence of religious gatherings – be it worship services, social events, or community outreach programs – is to provide spiritual nourishment, foster community ties, and contribute meaningfully to the faith journey of every participant (Allen, Lawton & Seibel, 2023). By comprehending how these activities shape and are shaped by the faith journeys of congregants, religious leaders and policymakers can more adeptly craft experiences that resonate deeply and personally with each member.



Another critical aspect illuminated by this study is the level of commitment churchgoers showcase towards active ministry roles. A congregation's dedication isn't merely reflected in attendance numbers but more profoundly in their willingness to partake in, contribute to, and lead ministry initiatives (Allen, Lawton & Seibel, 2023). Delving into this dimension offers churches a mirror to their health, vitality, and the depth of their congregant's engagement. By understanding the factors that foster or inhibit commitment, churches can tailor their programs, training, and opportunities in ways that bolster active participation.

Furthermore, in the intricate tapestry of faith, personal spiritual growth remains a cornerstone. Understanding its symbiotic relationship with church engagement provides insights into the cyclical nature of faith nourishment. As congregants engage more deeply with the church, their spiritual growth is enhanced, which in turn drives further commitment and engagement. By exploring this cyclical pattern, this research offers churches a blueprint to nurture spiritual growth in ways that continually rejuvenate and invigorate congregant engagement.

The practical implications of this research are manifold. With tangible recommendations and guidelines derived from empirical findings, religious institutions stand to benefit substantially. Such insights don't merely offer a reactive solution but proactively guide religious communities in sculpting experiences, programs, and engagements that are both contemporary and deeply spiritual. This alignment ensures that while churches remain rooted in their age-old traditions and beliefs, they also evolve in harmony with the needs, aspirations, and challenges of



their modern congregants.

Lastly, beyond the immediate stakeholders – the churches and their congregations – this research contributes profoundly to academia and sociologists. As societies grow more diverse and pluralistic, understanding the evolving dynamics of religious engagement offers valuable insights into broader patterns of community engagements, shared values, and collective aspirations (Wolf & Moser, 2011). This research, hence, serves as a valuable repository not just for religious scholars but for anyone keen on understanding the complex interplay of tradition, faith, community, and modernity in today's world.

In essence, the significance of this study lies not just in its immediate practical implications for churches but also in its broader contributions to understanding the pulse of community engagements in contemporary societies. The insights derived promise to shape discussions, policies, and strategies in religious corridors, ensuring churches remain vibrant, relevant, and deeply connected with their congregants.

## 1.6 Research Scope

The research scope delineates the specific areas, dimensions, and boundaries that will be explored, providing a roadmap for the extent and limitations of the investigative journey. This project seeks to navigate the intricate maze of contemporary religious engagement, with a focus on understanding the factors that

bolster participation and commitment within church settings.

At the outset, the research directs its lens towards the myriad strategies employed by churches to captivate and engage their congregants. From structured liturgical practices that have stood the test of time to more contemporary, adaptive activities that cater to the evolving needs of modern churchgoers, the study aspires to grasp the vast spectrum of engagement approaches. Here, the emphasis is not merely on the quantity or variety of activities, but their qualitative impact. Which strategies resonate deeply, fostering an environment where attendees evolve into active participants? Which of them contribute meaningfully to the spiritual growth and communal bonds of the congregants? These are questions the research ambitiously seeks to unpack.

Further, understanding engagement is incomplete without delving into the perceived relevance of church activities. The study, hence, commits to probing the intricate relationship between engagement strategies and their role in making church activities integral to an individual's life. The modern era, with its dizzying array of distractions and alternatives to religious engagement, poses a challenge to traditional institutions. The research endeavors to understand how churches can continue to be sanctuaries of relevance amidst these external dynamics. How do church activities contribute to, or detract from, the personal faith journey of an individual? Is the church still seen as a cornerstone for moral and spiritual guidance? And how do different engagement strategies affect this perception? These queries form the core of this segment of the research scope.



Commitment to ministry, a deeper, more entrenched form of engagement, also falls within the purview of this investigation. While many might attend church services or participate in events, fewer take the plunge into active ministry roles. What spurs this transition from passive observer to active contributor? And conversely, what barriers prevent many from donning a more involved role in church affairs? By unearthing these insights, the study hopes to offer churches a clearer picture of how to foster a more participative and involved congregation.

Central to this research is the intricate dance between individual spiritual growth and the broader church experience. This scope is not limited to examining them in isolation but seeks to understand their reciprocal relationship. How does an individual's spiritual journey influence their level of church engagement? And in turn, how does the church experience either nurture or stifle this personal spiritual evolution? By exploring this symbiotic relationship, the research hopes to illuminate the interconnectedness of personal faith and communal religious experiences.

However, all these explorations aim not just to contribute to the annals of academic research but to have tangible, real-world implications. The research is rooted in a drive for practicality, seeking to translate its findings into actionable recommendations. Churches, in their quest to remain relevant and vibrant, can leverage these insights to fine-tune their strategies, ensuring they remain effective touchpoints in the lives of their congregants.



In its essence, this research scope is expansive yet precise, holistic yet detailed. It stands at the crossroads of religion, sociology, and community dynamics, striving to paint a comprehensive picture of modern church engagement. Through its meticulous explorations, it hopes to offer churches a mirror to reflect upon their current practices and a compass to navigate their future trajectory.

## 1.7 Research Limitations

In the pursuit of understanding the complexities surrounding engagement strategies and their influence on churchgoers' commitment and spiritual journey, certain limitations are inherent to the study. Acknowledging these limitations not only offers transparency but also provides context within which the study's findings should be interpreted.

First and foremost, the variability in church denominations and practices poses a significant limitation. Churches, across different denominations and geographical locations, can have vastly different traditions, teachings, and engagement strategies. While the research aims to offer a comprehensive analysis, capturing the full spectrum of these diverse practices is challenging. Hence, the study might lean towards strategies more prevalent in certain denominations over others, inadvertently sidelining some unique or lesser-known practices.

Another limitation stems from the subjective nature of spiritual experiences. The research, in its quest to understand the relevance of church activities in an individual's faith journey, relies heavily on personal testimonies and experiences. These are deeply personal, often ineffable, and can vary significantly from one individual to another (Pargament, et al., 1990). While the study will strive for an objective analysis, the inherent subjectivity of these experiences might introduce certain biases or skew the overall understanding.

Further, the dynamic nature of societal values and cultural shifts, especially in the modern era, can influence churchgoers' perceptions and commitment levels. This study, being a snapshot in time, might not fully capture the ongoing evolution of societal influences on religious engagement. What might be a pertinent engagement strategy today could evolve or become obsolete in the face of rapid societal changes. Therefore, while the findings provide valuable insights, they might need periodic revisiting to remain relevant.

Additionally, the research's emphasis on active ministry roles as a measure of deeper engagement could unintentionally sideline other meaningful, albeit less visible, forms of commitment. Not every deeply engaged churchgoer might choose, or have the means, to participate in formal ministry roles. Their absence from active ministry doesn't necessarily equate to a lack of commitment or engagement. This nuanced distinction, though acknowledged, might not be exhaustively explored, limiting the study's understanding of commitment.



The methodology employed, whether qualitative or quantitative, brings its own set of limitations. If the study leans heavily on surveys or questionnaires, the responses might be influenced by the respondents' desire to provide socially acceptable answers, rather than their genuine feelings or beliefs. On the other hand, in-depth interviews, while offering richer insights, might not be as representative of the broader churchgoing population due to the smaller sample size typically associated with such methods.

Lastly, the development of practical recommendations, while grounded in the research findings, has its limitations. Churches, being diverse entities with unique challenges, histories, and congregational dynamics, might find some recommendations more applicable than others. A one-size-fits-all approach is not the intent, but the broader nature of the recommendations might require individual churches to adapt them to their specific contexts.

In conclusion, while "Sustaining Relevance" aspires to shed light on the intricate web of church engagement strategies and their outcomes, it is imperative for readers and stakeholders to approach the findings with an awareness of these limitations. No research, no matter how comprehensive, can claim to be entirely devoid of limitations. Recognizing them ensures that the insights gleaned are contextualized and applied judiciously.



## 1.8 Definition of Terms

In scholarly pursuits, clarity is of utmost importance. For the research, certain terms hold specific connotations that need elucidation to ensure a unified understanding. Defining these terms not only offers precision but also ensures that readers and stakeholders share a common language when interpreting the research's findings and recommendations.

### (i) Churchgoers

Churchgoers refers to individuals who regularly attend church services or activities (Park & Smith, 2000). This term encompasses a wide range of individuals, from those who attend services sporadically to those deeply entrenched in daily church activities. Their motivations, backgrounds, and levels of involvement might differ, but they all share a connection to the church institution.

### (ii) Engagement Strategies

Engagement Strategies denote the various techniques, programs, or methods employed by churches to foster deeper connections with their members and encourage active participation (Whiteman, 2023). These strategies can range from worship style alterations, the introduction of new community outreach programs, social events, or even digital outreach in the age of technology.



(iii) Church Activities

Church Activities encompass a myriad of events, programs, and gatherings organized under the church's auspices, aiming to foster community, spirituality, and service (Dowson, 2014). They range from traditional worship services, where congregants come together to pray, sing, and receive spiritual teachings, to community outreach programs, designed to offer support to the wider community or spread the church's teachings. Additionally, they can include social events, such as picnics, retreats, or study groups, which provide an opportunity for church members to bond, share, and grow together in a less formal setting. These activities are the lifeblood of a church, serving both a spiritual and social purpose, acting as the bridge between doctrine and daily living, ensuring that faith is not just professed but practiced.

(iv) Relevance

Relevance in the context of this study pertains to the perceived significance or importance of church activities in an individual's life. It's a measure of how churchgoers view the church's role in their personal, spiritual, and social lives. A highly relevant church activity would be one that deeply resonates with the individual, influencing their beliefs, values, and actions (Hill, et al., 2000).

(v) Faith Journey



Faith Journey alludes to an individual's spiritual evolution over time. It's a deeply personal trajectory that encompasses an individual's beliefs, experiences, challenges, and moments of epiphany within their religious framework. Every churchgoer is on a unique faith journey, influenced by personal experiences, teachings, and interactions within and outside the church (Olsen & Timothy, 2006).

(vi) Commitment to Ministry

Commitment to Ministry involves the dedication and active involvement of churchgoers in various church roles and responsibilities (Hawkins & Parkinson, 2011). This can manifest in numerous ways, from taking on leadership roles, participating in community outreach, volunteering for church activities, or even offering mentorship to younger members. It's a measure of an individual's willingness to contribute actively to the church's mission and vision.

(vii) Faith Integration

Faith Integration represents the interplay between personal spiritual growth and active participation in church activities (Zinnbauer, et al., 2015). It examines how an individual's personal beliefs influence, and are influenced by, their interactions with the church. This term seeks to understand the symbiotic relationship between personal spirituality and collective worship.



(viii) Practical Recommendations

Practical Recommendations, within the scope of this study, refer to actionable suggestions based on research findings. These are aimed at aiding churches and religious communities in refining their engagement strategies, ensuring relevance, and fostering deeper commitment levels among their members (Gordon da Cruz, 2017).

In delving into the intricacies of church engagement, the aforementioned definitions provide a foundational understanding. They act as guideposts, ensuring that the research's nuances, findings, and discussions are rooted in clarity. As the exploration deepens, these definitions ensure that the discourse remains anchored, offering insights that are both profound and comprehensible.





## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

#### 2.1 Chapter Introduction

In the literature review section of the research study, a detailed examination is presented, weaving through various facets of church engagement and commitment. This segment of the study starts by retracing the historical pathways of church engagement, providing a backdrop against which the evolution of religious practices can be understood. Following this, the focus shifts to dissecting the theories that underpin religious engagement and commitment, offering a lens to view the motivations and dynamics inherent in religious participation. The review then addresses the influence of societal changes on church participation, highlighting the correlation between cultural shifts and changes in congregational involvement. The evolution and prevailing trends in church activities are scrutinized next, offering insights into how religious practices have adapted to stay relevant in an ever-changing societal context. The impact of technology in reshaping modern church engagement is also critically examined, recognizing the digital era's influence on religious experience. The efficacy of various community outreach efforts is then explored to gauge how churches impact and serve their wider communities. A deep dive into the psychology of religious commitment follows, unraveling the mental and emotional factors that drive sustained involvement in church activities. The complex interplay between personal faith journeys and church participation is then explored, shedding light on how individual spiritual growth is intertwined with church activities. The chapter culminates with an analysis of best practices in church engagement,



drawing lessons from successful strategies and case studies to propose effective approaches for church involvement. This comprehensive review meticulously lays the groundwork for understanding the multifaceted nature of church engagement in the contemporary religious landscape, setting the stage for the study's empirical inquiries and subsequent discussions.

## 2.2 Historical Context of Church Engagement

In the literature review focusing on historical context of church engagement, a thorough exploration into the evolutionary trajectory of church involvement is undertaken. This exploration begins with the nascent Christian communities, where the concept of church engagement was interwoven into the very fabric of daily existence. During these early periods, the church transcended its role as merely a place of worship and became a vital hub for communal interactions, support systems, and a sense of collective belonging. This foundational era established the bedrock principles of church engagement, emphasizing community, fellowship, and shared religious experiences (Allen & Lawton, 2012).

The journey continues into the Middle Ages, an era distinguished by the church's substantial role in shaping European societal structures. This epoch witnessed the church not only as a spiritual beacon but also as a pivotal political and social influencer (Gorski, 2000). The traditions and practices that emerged during this time significantly molded individual engagement with the church. Rituals such as Mass, confession, and various church-centric celebrations became intertwined



with the societal fabric, reinforcing the church's influence over cultural norms and communal practices (Rhodes, 2020).

Advancing into the Renaissance and Enlightenment, the review examines how burgeoning notions of individualism, coupled with scientific and philosophical advancements, began to recalibrate the dynamics of church engagement (Wood, 2012). The focus gradually shifted towards personal faith narratives and individual spiritual explorations, challenging the traditional communal-centric religious practices. This era set the stage for more personalized forms of worship and critical reassessment of longstanding church doctrines.

The narrative then transitions to the modern context, characterized by rapid technological progress, the advent of globalization, and evolving societal values. This segment investigates how these transformative forces have reshaped the modalities of church engagement. The modern church, in response to this evolution, has embraced a variety of strategies, ranging from modernized worship services to leveraging digital platforms, to connect with a more diverse and dispersed congregation (Crompton, 2018).

Throughout this historical analysis, the literature review emphasizes the influence of each period's unique socio-cultural milieu on church engagement methodologies. It highlights the church's enduring capacity to adapt and respond to the shifting needs and values of society. This historical lens offers invaluable insights into contemporary church engagement strategies, tracing their origins to a

longstanding and rich historical narrative.

In essence, this section of the literature review casts light on the historical journey of church engagement, revealing an adaptive and evolving relationship between religious institutions and their congregations over the centuries. Understanding this historical backdrop enriches the comprehension of current engagement strategies, illustrating how they are the culmination of a complex interplay of religious, social, and cultural transformations over time.

### 2.3 Theories of Religious Engagement and Commitment

In the literature review chapter dedicated to 'Theories of Religious Engagement and Commitment', a nuanced dissection of various theoretical frameworks is presented, elucidating the multifaceted reasons behind individual involvement with religious practices and institutions. This segment is integral in constructing a theoretical base that sheds light on the complex web of motivations driving religious adherence and the varying dynamics of engagement.

Central to this discussion is the application of Rational Choice Theory to religious behavior. This approach argues that individuals engage with religious institutions and activities through a lens of rational decision-making, weighing the benefits against potential costs (Iannaccone, 2016). Choices regarding religious involvement, according to this theory, are influenced by the perceived gains, whether they are in the form of community support, spiritual satisfaction, or moral direction.

The literature review also delves into Emile Durkheim's perspective on the social functionality of religion. Durkheim, a seminal figure in sociology, posited that religion plays a key role in fostering social cohesion. From this viewpoint, participation in religious activities is seen as a glue that binds individuals to a collective ethos, promoting a sense of community and shared identity (Misztal, 2003). This theory places significant emphasis on the communal nature of religious participation and the way religious rituals and practices strengthen social bonds and collective identities.

Exploring further, the review considers the Identity Theory of Religious Involvement. This concept suggests that for many individuals, religious practices and affiliations are deeply entwined with their sense of self and identity. This theory offers insight into how religious commitment can be an integral part of one's personal narrative, influencing life choices and personal development (Ysseldyk, Matheson & Anisman, 2010).

The review then examines the Psychological Compensation Theory, which proposes that engagement in religious activities often responds to psychological needs. This includes the need for security, mechanisms for coping during stressful periods, or a quest for meaning. This perspective illuminates how religious practices can offer emotional and psychological solace, aiding individuals in managing life's challenges and uncertainties (Skinner & Wellborn, 2019).



Finally, the discussion turns to the Social Learning Theory in the realm of religious engagement. This theory underscores the impact of early socialization into religious practices and the influence of one's immediate social environment in shaping religious beliefs and behaviors. It suggests that individuals are more likely to participate in religious activities if they have been inculcated with religious values from a young age or are part of a community where such involvement is a normative behavior (O'Connor, Hoge & Alexander, 2020).

These diverse theories collectively provide a comprehensive understanding of the motivations behind religious engagement and commitment. From rational decision-making and psychological fulfillment to social cohesion, identity development, and the influence of social upbringing, these theories weave a complex tapestry that explains the various dimensions of religious involvement. This thorough exploration of theoretical perspectives establishes a solid foundation for the study, paving the way for further empirical research in the subsequent sections of the analysis.

## 2.4 Impact of Societal Changes on Church Participation

In the literature review section focusing on 'Impact of Societal Changes on Church Participation' within the study, a multi-dimensional analysis is presented. This exploration delves into the nuanced ways in which evolving societal norms, demographic shifts, and cultural transformations have shaped patterns of engagement and participation within church communities.



Commencing with societal values, there's an acknowledgment of the significant shift towards secularization in contemporary society. This shift, particularly pronounced in Western contexts, has fostered an environment where traditional religious practices are often juxtaposed against a backdrop of growing secular ideologies (Davie, Woodhead & Catto, 2016). The review probes how this dichotomy between secular and religious worldviews has led to a discernible change in church attendance and involvement. For instance, the rise of individualism challenges the collectivist nature of religious congregations, compelling churches to reevaluate and often reconfigure their approaches to engagement and community building (Lee, 2013).

Demographic shifts, another cornerstone of this analysis, offer a kaleidoscope through which the changing face of church participation can be viewed. Urbanization, characterized by the migration of populations to urban centers, poses unique challenges for church engagement, often diluting the traditional, community-centric approach that churches historically relied upon (Rogers, et al., 2020). Furthermore, migration patterns, especially in multicultural societies, bring a diverse array of cultural and religious backgrounds into the church fold, necessitating a more inclusive and adaptable approach to church activities and engagement strategies.

Cultural transformations, occurring both globally and locally, have a profound impact on church participation (Wuthnow & Offutt, 2008). In an era where cultural boundaries are increasingly blurred, churches find themselves at the intersection of various cultural influences (Jacobsen, 2012). This section of the review examines



how churches are navigating this cultural confluence, adapting their services, rituals, and community activities to resonate with a more culturally diverse congregation. The challenge here is twofold: maintaining the essence of traditional religious practices while embracing cultural inclusivity.

Finally, the review touches upon the undeniable influence of technological advancements on church participation. The digital revolution has not only altered the landscape of communication and interaction but has also permeated the religious sphere. The increasing prevalence of online religious services, social media engagement, and digital dissemination of religious content has transformed the way individuals engage with their faith (Campbell & Vitullo, 2016). This segment explores both the opportunities and challenges that arise from this digital integration, assessing how it has redefined the notion of religious participation and community.

In summary, this literature review section meticulously unravels the complex interplay between societal changes and church participation. By examining shifts in societal values, demographic changes, cultural dynamics, and technological advancements, the review provides a comprehensive understanding of the contemporary challenges and opportunities facing church communities. This analysis is crucial in laying the groundwork for the development of effective engagement strategies that are responsive to the evolving societal landscape.

## 2.5 Church Activities: Evolution and Current Trends

In the segment, a detailed exploration is conducted into the transformative



journey of church practices amidst shifting societal landscapes. This examination is crucial, unraveling how church activities have morphed from their traditional constructs to modern forms that resonate with contemporary societal norms.

The review commences with an analysis of traditional church activities, primarily centered around worship services deeply rooted in ritual and formality. These services, characterized by their structured liturgy, served a dual purpose: facilitating spiritual enrichment and fostering communal bonds (Foley & Hoge, 2007). They reflected the collective approach to faith, mirroring the broader societal values and cultural expectations of the time.

Advancing through the narrative, the review identifies a marked evolution in the nature of church activities, a change most notable in recent decades. This evolution is seen as a response to the evolving pace and nature of society, increasingly characterized by rapid technological advancements and a shift towards individualism. Contemporary church activities, especially worship services, have adapted significantly. The introduction of contemporary music, the use of multimedia tools, and a shift to a more engaging and dialogic sermon style are not merely cosmetic changes; they represent a deeper shift in addressing the evolving engagement patterns of modern congregations (Williams, 2008).

Furthermore, the review observes a broadening in the scope of social events organized by churches. Whereas these events traditionally revolved around internal community building and fellowship, modern church events have diversified to

encompass a wide array of activities (Gibbs & Bolger, 2005). This expansion, ranging from community outreach to cultural events and youth initiatives, reflects an adaptation to the diverse interests of contemporary churchgoers, fostering broader engagement within and beyond the church community.

The literature review also delves into the complexities embedded in this transition. It discusses the challenges and opportunities arising from adapting church activities to meet contemporary needs, probing the delicate balance between preserving traditional religious values and embracing change. This discussion brings to the fore critical considerations about the essence of religious practices and the implications of adapting these practices in a rapidly changing societal context.

In sum, this portion of the literature review provides an insightful overview of the evolving nature of church activities. By dissecting the changes in worship styles and social events, it highlights how religious practices and community engagement within churches are being reshaped in response to contemporary societal dynamics. This analysis is instrumental in understanding the current state of church participation, setting a foundation for developing strategies aimed at enhancing and sustaining church engagement in a constantly evolving world.

## 2.6 Role of Technology in Modern Church Engagement

In the 'Role of Technology in Modern Church Engagement' section of the literature review for the study, a thorough investigation is conducted into how digital advancements are reshaping church practices and influencing congregational

interactions. This crucial part of the review delves into the multifaceted impact of digital media and technological innovations on the traditional paradigms of church engagement.

The review begins by recognizing the profound influence of the digital era on all facets of daily life, including the sphere of religious practice. Technology's infusion into church activities signifies a pivotal departure from conventional methods of religious engagement (Campbell, 2010). This transition has seen churches increasingly embracing digital tools not just as supplementary aids but as central components of worship, communication, and community connection.

A significant focus of the review is on the transformation of worship services through digital means. The incorporation of technologies like projectors for hymns, video elements in sermons, and live streaming of church services has revolutionized the traditional worship experience. These technological elements cater to a digitally literate congregation, aligning the worship experience with the digital communication modes prevalent in their daily lives (Panzer, 2022).

Additionally, the review explores the burgeoning role of social media and online platforms in nurturing church communities. In an era where geographical or physical constraints can impede participation, digital spaces offer alternative avenues for connection and spiritual growth (Bansal & Choudhary, 2023). From disseminating service broadcasts to hosting virtual meetings and online prayer circles, these platforms have expanded the boundaries of church community

engagement, offering new pathways for interaction and fellowship.

The literature review also contemplates the challenges and potentialities presented by this shift to digital engagement. While the accessibility and reach of technology have opened new doors for interaction and outreach, it also prompts reflection on the nature and depth of virtual versus in-person connections (Parish, 2020). The review probes into how churches can strike an effective balance between leveraging digital tools and preserving the essential elements of personal interaction and physical community presence.

In essence, this section of the literature review provides a detailed examination of the intersection between technology and modern church engagement. By analyzing the integration of digital media into worship, the use of online platforms for community building, and the broader implications of this digital transformation, the review sheds light on the evolving nature of religious practice and congregation dynamics in the digital age. This comprehensive analysis is foundational in understanding the contemporary landscape of church engagement and in formulating strategies that effectively harness technology to maintain and enhance church involvement in a rapidly evolving digital world.

## 2.7 Psychology of Religious Commitment

In the intricately woven 'Psychology of Religious Commitment' segment of the literature review for, there is an immersive journey into the psychological undercurrents that root an individual's engagement in church ministries and

activities. This segment stands out as a critical piece in the puzzle, dissecting the blend of internal motivations and external societal forces that shape a person's adherence to religious practices.

Embarking on this exploration, the review delves deep into the intricate interplay between personal drives and the broader societal influences impacting a person's involvement in religious activities. It scrutinizes the quest for individual meaning and identity, juxtaposed with the intrinsic human craving for community and a sense of belonging. This exploration shines a light on how involvement in religious activities dovetails with more extensive facets of personal psychology, transcending mere doctrinal adherence.

Significant weight is given to the process of forging a religious identity and its profound impact on an individual's commitment to church activities. The analysis probes how intertwining religious practices with one's self-perception and life perspective can profoundly deepen their connection to these activities. It dissects the synergy between religious participation and personal identity, showcasing how this nexus can significantly bolster an individual's connection with their church (Lim & Putnam, 2010).

Turning its focus to the social dynamics within the church's ecosystem, the review assesses how integration into a religious community meets deep-seated psychological needs for connection and support, thereby reinforcing church commitment. The role of the church as a social support network, fostering shared

objectives and a collective identity, is thoroughly examined (Ellison & George, 1994).

Additionally, this segment of the literature review navigates the realms of personal spiritual experiences and their bearing on religious commitment. It delves into how moments of profound religious insight or transcendental experiences within the religious context can amplify an individual's fidelity to their faith and their church community (Lee, Poloma & Post, 2013). The critical role of personal spiritual growth in nurturing religious engagement is highlighted, underscoring its importance.

The review does not shy away from addressing the challenges that confront religious commitment. It engages with complex issues such as cognitive dissonance and the ramifications of shifting societal norms and cultural landscapes, analyzing how they can impact one's religious dedication.

In its entirety, the 'Psychology of Religious Commitment' section of the literature review offers a comprehensive dissection of the psychological factors that fuel an individual's involvement in church activities. By methodically unpacking elements like the development of a religious identity, the impact of community and social ties, the influence of personal spiritual experiences, and the hurdles in sustaining commitment, this portion of the review provides an in-depth understanding of the psychological facets of religious participation. This thorough analysis is pivotal in decoding the intricate web surrounding religious commitment and is instrumental in formulating strategies aimed at boosting and maintaining active engagement in church life.

## 2.8 Faith Integration and Personal Spiritual Growth

In the 'Faith Integration and Personal Spiritual Growth' portion of the literature review, a nuanced exploration unfolds, delving into the dynamic interplay between active involvement in church activities and individual spiritual evolution. This critical examination is pivotal for understanding the diverse ways church engagements contribute to and reflect the unfolding of personal faith.

Commencing with an intricate dissection of faith development, the review navigates through the varied landscape of church activities. These range from the introspective realms of prayer and worship to the community-centric realms of service and fellowship. Each, in its unique way, serves as a catalyst for spiritual maturation (Moody, 2017). This part of the review scrutinizes how these distinct forms of engagement collectively shape an individual's spiritual odyssey, opening avenues for profound reflection, learning, and a deeper assimilation of religious doctrines.

At the heart of this discourse is the transformative power of active involvement in church life. Far surpassing mere attendance, this engagement signifies a deeper immersion in the faith's practices and teachings (Tirres & Schikore, 2020). Such involvement is depicted as essential for fostering a more intimate spiritual connection, often precipitating pivotal moments of growth and personal revelation.



The analysis then turns to the impact of individual spiritual experiences within the church milieu. These moments of profound spiritual insight or awakening, encountered during various church engagements, are critically evaluated. They are depicted as instrumental in the development of a more layered and refined understanding of one's faith and convictions.

Equally crucial is the exploration of communal experiences in church settings and their influence on personal spiritual journeys. The review contemplates the profound effects of being part of a community of believers, engaging in shared experiences. Mutual support, collective wisdom, and the shared journey within these communities are recognized as substantial in nurturing and deepening one's spirituality (Gallagher & Newton, 2009).

Moreover, the review thoughtfully engages with the complexities entwined in integrating faith into personal life. It brings to light the challenges individuals may face as they strive to align their personal spiritual beliefs with the broader doctrines of their church, exploring how such alignment, or the lack thereof, can profoundly impact spiritual growth (Crossman, 2016).





## Chapter 3

### Research Methodology

#### 3.1 Chapter Introduction

Chapter 3 of the study, focusing on research methodology, delineates the comprehensive framework and systematic approaches employed in investigating the strategies for engaging Malaysian churchgoers. The research adopts a quantitative methodology with a cross-sectional design, specifically chosen for its effectiveness in capturing a snapshot of current churchgoer engagement practices and attitudes. Targeting the Malaysian population aged 18 and above who are active churchgoers, the study sets clear inclusion criteria to ensure a focused and relevant participant base. Employing a non-probabilistic, convenience sampling method, the approach facilitates efficient data collection from a readily accessible subset of the population. The sample size is determined using the Krejcie and Morgan table, based on the total number of Christians in Malaysia, ensuring statistical significance and representativeness. A carefully designed survey questionnaire, comprising approximately 10-12 questions per research objective, serves as the primary research instrument, capturing data across various dimensions of church engagement. The data collection is streamlined through the use of a Google Form, transformed into a URL for ease of distribution and accessibility. To bolster the validity and reliability of the findings, rigorous measures are implemented, including strategies to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the quantitative data collected. A pilot study with 30 respondents tests the reliability of the constructs using Cronbach's Alpha. Data analysis encompasses both demographic and



descriptive analysis, providing a nuanced understanding of the participant profile and their responses. Finally, the research methodology is underpinned by stringent ethical considerations, addressing issues related to consent and confidentiality to uphold the integrity and ethical standards of the research.

## 3.2 Research Design

The research design for this study is a cornerstone in understanding its methodology and approach. This study employs a quantitative methodology with a cross-sectional design, a decision underpinned by specific rationales that align with the study's objectives and the nature of the data required.

### **Quantitative Methodology:**

At the heart of the research design is the quantitative methodology, selected for its ability to provide objective, measurable, and statistically analyzable data (Lee, et al., 2021). Quantitative research is characterized by its focus on numbers and values, making it particularly suited for studies that seek to quantify opinions, behaviors, or other defined variables and generalize results from a larger sample population (Sallis, et al., 2021). This methodology is ideal for this study because it aims to assess the engagement strategies of churchgoers in Malaysia, a task that requires the collection of specific, quantifiable data to understand trends, patterns, and correlations.

The use of quantitative methods facilitates the gathering of data that can be

numerically analyzed, allowing for the identification of patterns and relationships among different variables related to church engagement. For instance, the study can quantitatively measure the frequency of church attendance, the level of participation in church activities, and the correlation between demographic factors and church engagement levels. By utilizing statistical analysis, this approach also enables the study to test hypotheses and validate the theories underpinning church engagement and commitment strategies.

### **Cross-Sectional Design:**

The research adopts a cross-sectional design, a methodological approach that involves collecting data at a single point in time. This design is chosen for its efficiency and effectiveness in providing a snapshot of the current state (Spector, 2019) of churchgoer engagement in Malaysia. Cross-sectional studies are particularly useful for studies that aim to analyze a specific situation or phenomenon at a given moment, without the need for longitudinal tracking over extended periods (Pawar, 2020).

The cross-sectional design allows the study to capture a wide range of data from a diverse group of respondents simultaneously. This is advantageous in understanding the current engagement practices and preferences among Malaysian churchgoers, offering insights into their present-day attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. The design also facilitates a quicker data collection process compared to longitudinal studies, making it a practical choice given the study's scope and resource constraints.



Another benefit of this design is its effectiveness in comparative analysis. The study can compare data across different demographic groups, church types, or geographical locations within Malaysia. This comparison provides a richer, more comprehensive understanding of church engagement across various segments of the population.

### **Rationale for Selecting This Design:**

The decision to employ a quantitative methodology with a cross-sectional design is driven by several factors. First, the study's objective to identify effective engagement strategies and assess their impact necessitates a method that can gather concrete, quantifiable data from a broad population segment. Quantitative methods are well-suited for this purpose, as they enable the collection of data that can be statistically analyzed to reveal significant trends and patterns.

Second, the study's focus on current engagement strategies and practices in Malaysian churches calls for a research design that can provide a contemporary overview. The cross-sectional design is ideal for capturing a current picture of churchgoer engagement, allowing the study to reflect the most recent trends and preferences in church activities and participation.

Lastly, the practical aspects of conducting research, including time constraints and resource availability, have also influenced the choice of this research design. A cross-sectional study using quantitative methods allows for efficient data

collection and analysis, making it a feasible approach given the study's logistical considerations.

In summary, the combination of a quantitative methodology and a cross-sectional design forms the backbone of this research, providing a robust framework for exploring and understanding the dynamics of churchgoer engagement in Malaysia. This approach ensures that the study can generate reliable, relevant, and timely insights, contributing significantly to the discourse on church engagement and commitment strategies.

### 3.3 Target Population

The target population for the research study on 'Sustaining Relevance: Strategies for Engaging Churchgoers in Meaningful Church Activities and Encouraging Ongoing Commitment to Church Ministry' is a well-defined group, crucial for obtaining accurate and relevant data. Understanding the characteristics of this population is key to ensuring that the findings of the study are representative and meaningful in the context of Malaysian church communities.

#### **Population of Interest:**

The study focuses on Malaysian residents who are active participants in church life. Malaysia, known for its cultural and religious diversity, offers a unique context for exploring church engagement. The population of interest is not confined to a single denomination or church, but rather encompasses a broad range of



Christian congregations across the country. This inclusive approach allows the study to capture a wide spectrum of practices, experiences, and perspectives within the Malaysian Christian community.

### **Criteria for Inclusion:**

The inclusion criteria are carefully selected to ensure the study focuses on individuals who are not only church members but also actively engaged in church activities. The criteria are as follows:

- **Nationality and Residency:**

The study is focused on Malaysian residents, providing a specific geographical and cultural context for the research. This focus ensures that the findings are relevant to the Malaysian church context and reflect the unique cultural, social, and religious landscape of the country.

- **Age:**

Participants must be aged 18 years and above. This age criterion is set to ensure that respondents are legally adults, capable of providing informed consent and offering mature insights based on their experiences. Focusing on this age group also means the study captures the views and experiences of individuals who are likely to have more autonomy in their church participation decisions.

- Church Attendance:

Active churchgoers, defined as individuals who attend church at least once per month, form the core of the study's population. This frequency of attendance ensures that the participants have a regular and ongoing engagement with their church community, providing them with ample experience and perspective on the engagement strategies and activities of their churches. This regularity is crucial as it signifies a level of commitment and involvement necessary for the depth of insight the study seeks to achieve.

#### **Criteria for Exclusion:**

To maintain the focus and relevance of the study, certain exclusion criteria are also established:

- Non-Malaysians or Non-Residents:

Individuals who are not Malaysian residents are excluded from the study. This exclusion is necessary to maintain a clear focus on the Malaysian church context and to ensure that the findings are applicable to the specific cultural and religious milieu of Malaysia.

- Minors:

Individuals under the age of 18 are excluded. This decision not only aligns with legal considerations regarding consent but also ensures that the study gathers data from individuals who have a certain level of independence and



personal decision-making capacity in their religious practices.

- Infrequent Churchgoers:

Those who attend church services less frequently than once a month are not included in the primary target population. This exclusion criterion is based on the rationale that infrequent attendees may not have sufficient engagement or exposure to the church's activities and strategies to provide the depth of feedback required for the study.

In conclusion, the target population for this study is well-defined, with clear inclusion and exclusion criteria that align with the research objectives. By focusing on Malaysian residents aged 18 and above who are active churchgoers, the study ensures that the data collected is both relevant and representative of the group it seeks to understand. This careful delineation of the target population is crucial for the validity and applicability of the study's findings to the context of church engagement in Malaysia.

### 3.4 Sampling Strategy

In the research study aimed at exploring strategies for engaging churchgoers and encouraging ongoing commitment to church ministry, the chosen sampling strategy plays a crucial role in determining the quality and relevance of the data collected. For this study, a non-probabilistic sampling method, specifically convenience sampling, has been selected. This decision is underpinned by several





considerations, aligning with the study's objectives and practical constraints.

Convenience sampling, a non-probabilistic method, involves selecting participants based on their availability and willingness to participate, rather than selecting from the broader population in a random manner (Mweshi & Sakyi, 2020). This approach is particularly advantageous for studies where access to potential respondents might be limited by geographic, financial, or time constraints. In the context of this research, convenience sampling allows for efficient and effective data collection from individuals who are readily accessible and represent the study's target demographic - Malaysian churchgoers aged 18 and above.

One of the primary reasons for choosing convenience sampling is its practicality (Knezovic & Drkic, 2021). This method facilitates easier access to a sufficient number of participants within the specified criteria, especially considering the study's focus on a specific population segment - active churchgoers. Churches, by their nature, are community-centric spaces where congregants gather regularly, making them ideal settings for implementing convenience sampling. Researchers can easily approach churchgoers before or after services, or during church-related events, to invite participation in the study. This ease of access is a significant factor, particularly when considering the need to collect data from a diverse range of churches across Malaysia.

Another rationale for selecting convenience sampling is the time and resource efficiency it offers (Krupnikov, Nam & Style, 2021). In comparison to probability

sampling methods, which require a comprehensive list of the entire population and often involve more complex and time-consuming procedures for random selection, convenience sampling is less resource-intensive. This efficiency is crucial for the study, which aims to gather a substantial amount of data within a limited timeframe and with limited resources.

Furthermore, convenience sampling aligns well with the study's exploratory nature. The research seeks to gather insights and perspectives on church engagement strategies, and convenience sampling provides an avenue to collect rich, qualitative data from participants who are actively involved in church activities. While this method may not yield a sample that is statistically representative of the entire population of Malaysian churchgoers, it does provide valuable insights into the experiences and opinions of those who are readily accessible and willing to share their perspectives.

However, it's important to acknowledge the limitations inherent in convenience sampling. The primary concern is the potential for sampling bias, as the sample may not accurately represent the broader population due to the non-random selection process. This limitation means that the findings might not be generalizable to all Malaysian churchgoers. To mitigate this, the study will aim to include participants from a wide range of churches, encompassing different denominations, sizes, and locations, to capture as diverse a range of perspectives as possible within the constraints of the sampling method.



In summary, convenience sampling is a practical and efficient choice for this research study, given its focus on a specific target population and the need for timely data collection. While it presents challenges in terms of representativeness, these are balanced by the method's practical advantages and alignment with the study's exploratory goals. This approach will enable the research to gather in-depth insights from a segment of the Malaysian churchgoing population, providing valuable data to inform the study's objectives and conclusions.

### 3.5 Sample Size

Determining an appropriate sample size is a critical step in the research process, particularly for a study focusing on 'Sustaining Relevance: Strategies for Engaging Churchgoers in Meaningful Church Activities and Encouraging Ongoing Commitment to Church Ministry.' For this study, the sample size calculation is guided by the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table, a widely recognized method in research for determining sample sizes, especially in studies employing quantitative methodologies.

The latest census data from the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM) in 2020 indicates that Christians constitute approximately 9.1% of the Malaysian population, amounting to around 3 million individuals. This figure provides a comprehensive base for determining the study's sample size, as it gives a clear picture of the total number of individuals who potentially fall within the study's target demographic - Malaysian Christians actively engaged in church activities.



*Table for Determining Sample Size from a Given Population*

<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	100000	384

Note.—*N* is population size.  
*S* is sample size.



According to the Krejcie and Morgan table, for a population exceeding 1 million, a sample size of 384 is recommended to achieve a statistically significant representation. This number is derived from statistical formulas that consider the desired confidence level and margin of error for the study. In the context of this research, a sample size of 384 will allow for conclusions to be drawn with a high degree of confidence regarding the engagement strategies and practices among Malaysian churchgoers.

However, it's important to consider the rationale behind choosing this particular sample size beyond the mere application of a statistical table. One of the primary reasons for adhering to the Krejcie and Morgan recommendation is to ensure that the sample is large enough to be statistically representative of the population, yet manageable in terms of data collection and analysis (Kharuddin, et al., 2020). With 384 participants, the study can achieve a balance between comprehensiveness and practicality, allowing for in-depth analysis without the logistical and resource challenges that come with an excessively large sample.

Additionally, a sample of this size provides sufficient power to detect significant differences or relationships within the data. This is particularly relevant for this study, which aims to explore various dimensions of church engagement and how they correlate with personal, social, and demographic factors. A smaller sample might not provide enough data to uncover these nuances, while a larger sample might pose challenges in terms of data management and increased complexity in analysis.

In terms of demographic distribution, while the sample size is determined based on the overall Christian population in Malaysia, efforts will be made to ensure that the sample is as diverse as possible. This includes striving for representation across different denominations, age groups, geographic locations, and levels of church involvement. Such diversity is crucial to ensure that the findings of the study are not biased towards a particular subgroup within the Christian community and that they reflect the varied experiences and perspectives of Malaysian churchgoers.

It is also important to note that while the Krejcie and Morgan table provides a sound statistical basis for determining the sample size, the actual feasibility of reaching the desired number of respondents will depend on various practical considerations, including the willingness of individuals to participate, accessibility of different church congregations, and the resources available for conducting the research.

In conclusion, the decision to target a sample size of 384, based on the Krejcie and Morgan table and considering the Christian population in Malaysia as per the 2020 census, is a strategic choice that balances statistical rigor with practical feasibility. This sample size is sufficiently large to provide reliable and valid data for the study, yet manageable enough to ensure thorough and efficient data collection and analysis. It is a critical component in ensuring that the study's findings are both credible and relevant to the broader context of church engagement in Malaysia.



### 3.6 Research Instrument

The research instrument chosen for the study on 'Sustaining Relevance: Strategies for Engaging Churchgoers in Meaningful Church Activities and Encouraging Ongoing Commitment to Church Ministry' is a meticulously designed survey questionnaire. This instrument is pivotal for gathering data that is both comprehensive and specific to the study's objectives. The rationale behind selecting a survey questionnaire lies in its effectiveness in collecting a large amount of data from numerous respondents within a relatively short period, while also maintaining consistency in the responses for statistical analysis.

#### **Structure and Content of the Questionnaire:**

##### 1. Confirmatory Questions

The survey begins with confirmatory questions aimed at validating the inclusion criteria. These initial queries ascertain that the respondent is Malaysian, over 18 years of age, and an active churchgoer. This step is crucial for ensuring that the responses collected are from the target demographic of the study and that the data is relevant and accurate.

##### 2. Demographic Questions

Following the confirmatory questions, the survey transitions into demographic queries. These questions are structured to gather essential information about the respondents, such as age, gender, education level, occupation, and denominational affiliation. All demographic questions offer multiple-choice



options for answers, ensuring straightforward and uniform responses for ease of analysis. The final demographic question uniquely asks for the frequency of church attendance in a month, requiring a numeric answer. This question aims to quantify the level of active church engagement among the respondents, providing valuable data for correlating church attendance with other variables in the study.

### 3. Research Objective-Based Questions

The core of the questionnaire consists of approximately 10-12 questions per research objective, totaling around 50-60 questions. These questions are carefully crafted to align with each of the five research objectives, ensuring that the data collected directly informs the study's aims.

- For 'Identifying Effective Engagement Strategies,' questions focus on various church activities, including worship services, social events, and community outreach programs, seeking to gauge their effectiveness in engaging the respondents.
- In assessing the 'Impact on Relevance,' the questions are designed to understand how these engagement strategies influence the perceived relevance of church activities in the lives of the respondents and their faith journey.
- To 'Examine Commitment to Ministry,' questions aim to explore the level of active involvement and commitment of respondents in church ministry roles





and responsibilities.

- The objective of 'Understanding Faith Integration' is addressed through questions that delve into the relationship between personal spiritual growth, church engagement, and ministry commitment.
- Lastly, for 'Developing Practical Recommendations,' questions seek to gather insights that can aid in formulating actionable guidelines for churches and religious communities.

#### 4. Response Format

Each research objective-based question in the survey is structured to be answered using a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 signifies 'strongly disagree,' 3 represents a 'neutral' stance, and 5 indicates 'strongly agree.' This format allows for a nuanced understanding of the respondents' attitudes and perceptions, providing a spectrum of responses that range from strong disagreement to strong agreement. The Likert scale is an effective tool for measuring attitudes and perceptions, offering quantifiable data that can be statistically analyzed to draw meaningful conclusions.

In summary, the survey questionnaire is designed to be comprehensive yet focused, aligning closely with the study's objectives and the need for detailed, quantifiable data. The structure of the questionnaire – from confirmatory and demographic questions to the main body aligned with the research objectives – ensures that the data collected is both relevant and robust. The use of a 5-point Likert scale further



enhances the quality of the data, allowing for the measurement of degrees of agreement or disagreement among the respondents. This carefully crafted research instrument is integral to the success of the study, providing the necessary data to analyze engagement strategies, their impact, and the factors influencing church commitment and participation among Malaysian churchgoers.

The survey questionnaire is as follows:

#### **Section A: Confirmatory Questions**

Questions	Response
Are you a resident of Malaysia?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are you aged 18 years or above?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Do you at least attend once church services in a month?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

#### **Section B: Demographic Questions**

Questions	Response
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Male

	<input type="checkbox"/> Female
Age	<input type="checkbox"/> 18-24 years old <input type="checkbox"/> 25-34 years old <input type="checkbox"/> 35-44 years old <input type="checkbox"/> 45-54 years old <input type="checkbox"/> More than 55 years old
Highest Level of Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Primary <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-U or equivalent <input type="checkbox"/> Tertiary <input type="checkbox"/> Other
Employment Status	<input type="checkbox"/> Student <input type="checkbox"/> Employed <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Employed <input type="checkbox"/> Retired
Marital Status	<input type="checkbox"/> Single <input type="checkbox"/> Married <input type="checkbox"/> Divorces <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed



Role in the Church	<input type="checkbox"/> Regular member <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer <input type="checkbox"/> Ministry leader <input type="checkbox"/> Church Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Pastor
Geographical Location	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban <input type="checkbox"/> Suburban <input type="checkbox"/> Rural
Number of Individuals in Household	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> More than 4
Frequency of visiting church in a Month	Integer

### **Section C: Engagement Strategies**

I feel actively engaged during worship services at my church.	5-point Likert scale whereby 1 means Strongly Disagree, 2 means Disagree, 3 means Neutral, 4
Social events at my church effectively foster a sense of community.	
I regularly participate in community outreach programs	



organized by my church.	means Agree and 5 means Strongly Agree
Digital platforms used by my church enhance my engagement.	
The church's activities cater to my spiritual needs.	
I feel that worship services are relevant to my personal life.	
My church offers varied activities that appeal to different age groups.	
I am satisfied with the level of communication from church leadership regarding activities.	
Church activities encourage me to invite friends and family to attend.	
I am aware of all the activities and programs my church offers.	

#### **Section D: Impact on Relevance**

My involvement in church activities has positively impacted my faith journey.	5-point Likert scale whereby 1 means Strongly Disagree, 2 means Disagree, 3 means Neutral, 4 means Agree and 5 means Strongly Agree
Church activities help me understand my faith better.	
I find that church teachings are applicable to everyday life.	
Participation in church activities has deepened my understanding of religious teachings.	
Being involved in church makes me feel more connected to my community.	
I often reflect on the teachings I receive at church.	



Church activities provide me with spiritual guidance.	
My participation in church activities enriches my personal life.	
Church involvement has strengthened my commitment to my faith.	
I feel motivated to learn more about my faith through church activities.	

### **Section E: Commitment to Ministry**

I am actively involved in at least one ministry at my church.	5-point Likert scale whereby 1 means Strongly Disagree, 2 means Disagree, 3 means Neutral, 4 means Agree and 5 means Strongly Agree
I feel a sense of responsibility towards my church community.	
Contributing to church activities is a priority for me.	
I see myself taking on more active roles in church in the future.	
I am committed to attending church regularly.	
Supporting church initiatives is important to me.	
I willingly volunteer for church events and activities.	
Being part of church ministries gives me a sense of fulfillment.	
I encourage others to participate more actively in church.	
My involvement in church ministries impacts my spiritual growth.	



## **Section F: Faith Integration and Spiritual Growth**

My involvement in church activities complements my personal spiritual practices.	5-point Likert scale whereby 1 means Strongly Disagree, 2 means Disagree, 3 means Neutral, 4 means Agree and 5 means Strongly Agree
I often experience personal spiritual growth through church-related activities.	
My faith is an integral part of my daily life.	
Church teachings have influenced my personal values and beliefs.	
Participation in church activities has led to meaningful spiritual experiences.	
I feel my personal spirituality is aligned with the teachings of my church.	
Engaging in church activities has deepened my prayer life.	
I feel spiritually supported by my church community.	
I actively seek opportunities for spiritual growth within my church.	
My involvement in church activities has strengthened my personal relationship with God.	

## **Section G: Practical Recommendations**

I would be more involved if my church offered a wider variety of educational and spiritual growth opportunities.	5-point Likert scale whereby 1 means Strongly Disagree, 2 means Disagree, 3
My church should invest more in engaging and relevant programs for youth and children.	



I feel that providing support for personal and family challenges should be a priority for my church.	means Neutral, 4
Increased involvement in outreach and community service projects would enhance my engagement with the church.	means Agree and 5
My church could benefit from implementing mentorship and discipleship programs.	means Strongly
Regular updates and clear communication from church leadership about activities and decisions would improve my experience.	Agree
Incorporating more contemporary music and creative arts in services would increase my engagement.	
I would be more engaged if there were more opportunities for small group gatherings and discussions.	
Having a variety of volunteer opportunities available would encourage me to be more active in the church.	
Utilizing technology to facilitate remote participation in services and events would help me stay more connected.	

### 3.7 Data Collection Methods

In this research study focused on enhancing churchgoer engagement strategies in Malaysia, a sophisticated and effective data collection method is employed, utilizing Google Forms transformed into a user-friendly URL. This digital approach was chosen for its broad accessibility and ease of use, both crucial in reaching a diverse audience within the target demographic. Google Forms is





particularly suited for this study because of its adaptability and compatibility with various devices, facilitating participation from a wide range of respondents (Upadhyay & Lipkovich, 2020). The tool's capability to handle different question types, from multiple-choice to Likert scales and open-ended questions, aligns perfectly with the diverse nature of the questionnaire designed to explore the depth and breadth of church engagement.

Upon converting the Google Form into a URL, it is distributed widely through email, social media, church newsletters, and other digital communication channels. This strategy ensures a far-reaching dissemination, increasing the likelihood of a substantial response rate. The survey begins with preliminary confirmatory questions, ensuring respondents meet the study's inclusion criteria, followed by a series of demographic and main survey questions. The digital format of Google Forms allows for an organized and efficient collection of responses, automatically categorizing data into a spreadsheet for analysis.

The process of data collection is meticulously planned, involving the circulation of the survey URL and subsequent reminders to encourage participation. Participants are made aware of the survey's purpose and reassured of the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses. These ethical assurances are vital, emphasizing voluntary participation and the right to withdraw at any time.

The decision to use Google Forms, and its consequent conversion into a URL, underpins the study's commitment to an inclusive, accessible, and ethically sound

approach to data collection. This method not only eases participation for respondents but also ensures the efficient management and analysis of collected data. With its broad reach, ease of access, and robust data handling capabilities, this digital approach to data collection is an integral component of the study, poised to significantly contribute to the successful gathering of meaningful insights into church engagement practices in Malaysia.

### 3.8 Validity and Reliability

Ensuring the validity and reliability of findings is a cornerstone of the research study focused on engaging churchgoers in Malaysia, and several methodical steps are taken to achieve this. The study, aimed at exploring strategies for meaningful church activities and commitment, prioritizes accuracy and consistency in its data collection and analysis processes. The survey questionnaire, which forms the backbone of the data collection, is developed based on an extensive literature review and existing theoretical frameworks, ensuring that each question is relevant and capable of effectively capturing the nuances of churchgoer engagement. A pilot test, conducted prior to the survey's final deployment, further aids in refining the questionnaire. This preliminary phase is critical for evaluating the effectiveness of the questions, enabling the elimination of any ambiguities and ensuring alignment with the research objectives.

In the context of a multilingual nation like Malaysia, the linguistic accuracy of the survey is also a key concern. To address this, the questionnaire undergoes a meticulous process of translation and back-translation, if necessary, ensuring that



language barriers do not hinder the understanding and responsiveness of the survey. Standardized procedures for data collection are employed to enhance the reliability of the study. These procedures include maintaining uniformity in the distribution and administration of the questionnaire, thereby minimizing variations that could affect the consistency of the data.

The study also employs statistical techniques to assess reliability, notably using Cronbach's Alpha to test the internal consistency of the scales in the questionnaire (Taber, 2018). This measure helps determine the extent to which different items within a scale are correlated, providing an indication of the reliability of the scale. A high Cronbach's Alpha value is indicative of a reliable scale, confirming that the items within it are consistently measuring the same underlying concept (Vaske, Beaman & Sponarski, 2017).

Ensuring the credibility and trustworthiness of the quantitative data is another crucial aspect of the study. This is achieved by guaranteeing the anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents, encouraging them to provide honest and accurate responses (McNeeley, 2012). The data analysis process is conducted with rigorous attention to detail and transparency. Established statistical methods are utilized for the analysis, and the procedures are clearly documented, lending credibility to the study's findings.

Moreover, the study acknowledges potential limitations in its methodology, openly discussing these and their potential impact on the findings. This transparent

approach not only adheres to ethical research standards but also provides a balanced and truthful representation of the study's outcomes, enhancing its overall integrity.

In summary, the research study employs a combination of carefully designed questionnaires, pilot testing, standardized data collection procedures, and robust statistical analysis to ensure the validity and reliability of its findings. The attention to linguistic accuracy, ethical handling of data, and acknowledgment of limitations further underscores the study's commitment to producing credible, reliable, and meaningful insights into the engagement strategies of Malaysian church communities.

### 3.9 Data Analysis Techniques

In the research study focused on strategies for engaging churchgoers in Malaysia, the data analysis techniques adopted are pivotal in extracting meaningful insights from the collected data. The approach to data analysis in this study is twofold, encompassing both demographic and descriptive analysis, each playing a crucial role in understanding the dynamics of church engagement and participation.

#### **Demographic Analysis:**

The demographic analysis serves as the foundation of the data interpretation process. This analysis involves scrutinizing the demographic information gathered through the survey, such as age, gender, education level, employment status,

denominational affiliation, and frequency of church attendance. By dissecting this demographic data, the study can identify patterns and trends within specific segments of the churchgoing population. For instance, it may reveal differences in engagement levels among different age groups or between various denominations, providing valuable insights into how demographic factors influence church participation.

The demographic analysis also aids in ensuring that the sample is representative of the broader population. By comparing the demographic characteristics of the sample with known statistics of the Malaysian Christian population, the study can assess the extent to which its findings can be generalized to the wider community. This step is crucial in establishing the validity of the study's conclusions and ensuring that they are reflective of the diverse Malaysian churchgoing populace.

Moreover, demographic analysis enables the segmentation of data, which is particularly useful in tailoring and refining subsequent analyses. By segmenting the data based on demographic variables, the study can conduct more nuanced analyses that consider the unique characteristics and preferences of different groups within the churchgoing community. This approach allows for a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of engagement strategies and their effectiveness across diverse groups.



### **Descriptive Analysis:**

Following the demographic analysis, the study employs descriptive analysis to delve deeper into the survey responses. Descriptive analysis involves summarizing and interpreting the data to extract key patterns, trends, and insights (Vaismoradi, Turunen & Bondas, 2013). This includes calculating frequencies, means, standard deviations, and other statistical measures that provide a clear picture of the respondents' attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors regarding church engagement.

One of the primary tools in descriptive analysis is the use of Likert scale responses. The study's survey questions, designed on a 5-point Likert scale, allow for the quantification of subjective responses into measurable data. By analyzing these responses, the study can gauge the levels of agreement or disagreement with various statements about church engagement strategies and their perceived effectiveness. This method provides a straightforward yet powerful means of understanding the prevailing sentiments among the respondents.

Descriptive analysis also involves exploring the relationships between different variables. For example, the study might examine how the frequency of church attendance correlates with the perceived relevance of church activities or how demographic factors like age and education level relate to commitment levels to church ministries. These analyses help in identifying potential factors that influence churchgoer engagement and can guide the development of targeted strategies for enhancing participation.



Furthermore, the use of graphical representations, such as bar graphs, pie charts, and histograms, is an integral part of the descriptive analysis. These visual tools help in presenting the data in an easily understandable and visually appealing format, making it easier to discern patterns and draw conclusions from the data.

In summary, the combination of demographic and descriptive analysis forms a comprehensive approach to data analysis in this study. By first understanding the demographic makeup of the respondents and then delving into the descriptive statistics of their responses, the study can provide a well-rounded analysis of churchgoer engagement in Malaysia. This detailed and methodical approach to data analysis is crucial in drawing accurate and insightful conclusions from the study, ultimately contributing to a better understanding of the factors that drive church participation and the development of effective engagement strategies.

### 3.10 Ethical Considerations

In the research study focused on identifying strategies for engaging churchgoers in meaningful activities and fostering commitment to church ministry, ethical considerations are of utmost importance. These considerations extend beyond mere procedural formalities, forming the bedrock of the research's integrity and underscoring a deep commitment to respecting, safeguarding, and upholding the dignity of all participants. One of the most crucial aspects of these ethical measures is informed consent. Participants are thoroughly briefed about the study's objectives, their role in it, and how the data will be utilized. This briefing is conducted in clear, accessible language to ensure complete understanding. Consent is actively

sought, affirming that participation is voluntary and that individuals can withdraw at any time without any repercussions, thereby upholding the principle of autonomy.

The confidentiality and anonymity of participants' responses are paramount. The study guarantees the strict privacy of personal information and responses (Coffelt, 2017). Identifying details are either removed or anonymized in the study's findings, ensuring responses cannot be linked back to individual participants, thus maintaining privacy. Data security is rigorously enforced, with access restricted to the research team and usage limited solely to the study's purposes.

Recognizing that discussions around personal beliefs and church involvement can be sensitive, the study is meticulously designed to identify and minimize potential psychological risks or discomfort. The questionnaire is carefully structured to avoid sensitive or potentially distressing questions, and participants are informed of their right to skip any questions they prefer not to answer. The respectful and non-intrusive approach is particularly crucial given the study's focus on personal faith and church activities, topics that are deeply personal and can be sensitive for some. The research team is prepared to offer support or referrals to those who might find these discussions uncomfortable.

Prior to beginning the study, ethical approval is sought from an appropriate institutional review board or ethics committee. This process involves a rigorous review of the study's methodology, questionnaire, and ethical protocols to ensure compliance with established ethical standards. This approval is pivotal as it provides



an independent verification of the study's adherence to ethical guidelines.

Transparency and integrity are the guiding principles throughout the research process. This commitment manifests in honest reporting of findings, acknowledgment of the study's limitations, and avoidance of any form of data manipulation (Johnson, Adkins & Chauvin, 2020). By adhering to these ethical principles, the study not only safeguards the rights and well-being of its participants but also enhances the credibility and validity of its findings. In sum, the ethical considerations in this study are comprehensive, encompassing informed consent, confidentiality, participant safety, respect for personal beliefs, ethical approval, and a commitment to transparency and integrity. These multifaceted measures ensure that the study is conducted with the highest ethical standards, contributing valuable and truthful insights into church engagement practices.

### 3.11 Chapter Conclusion

In conclusion, Chapter 3 of this research study outlines a comprehensive research methodology designed to explore effective strategies for engaging Malaysian churchgoers. A quantitative, cross-sectional design has been chosen for its suitability in addressing the research objectives and its effectiveness in analyzing the current trends and perceptions among the target population. This target population is specifically defined as Malaysian, aged 18 years and above, who are active churchgoers, ensuring the study's relevance and applicability to the Malaysian church context. A non-probabilistic, convenience sampling method is utilized, balancing practicality with the need for a broad representation of the churchgoing

population. Following the Krejcie and Morgan model, a significant sample size is determined, reflective of the Christian demographic in Malaysia, to ensure the study's statistical significance. A carefully structured survey questionnaire, comprising questions aligned with the study's five main objectives, serves as the primary research instrument, administered via a Google Form turned URL for accessibility and ease of distribution.

Crucial to this study is the emphasis on validity and reliability, with strategies implemented to enhance these aspects and ensure the credibility of the data. Rigorous demographic and descriptive analyses are planned to provide a nuanced understanding of the data, while ethical considerations are meticulously addressed, including informed consent and confidentiality, underscoring the study's commitment to ethical research practices. Collectively, these methodological components form a robust framework that underpins the study, ensuring that it will provide insightful, reliable, and ethically sound contributions to the understanding of church engagement practices in Malaysia.



## Chapter 4

### Data Analysis and Findings

#### 4.1 Chapter Introduction

Chapter 4 of this study delves into the meticulous analysis of data collected from Malaysian churchgoers, focusing on their engagement strategies and perceptions. The chapter opens with a presentation of reliability statistics, a fundamental step ensuring the robustness of the survey instrument. High Cronbach's Alpha values across various segments - Engagement Strategies, Impact of Relevance, Commitment to Ministry, Faith Integration and Spiritual Growth, and Practical Recommendations - reflect the internal consistency of the survey items, laying a solid foundation for data interpretation. The chapter then transitions into a comprehensive demographic analysis, revealing insightful patterns across variables such as gender, age, education level, employment status, marital status, role in the church, geographical location, household size, and frequency of church visits. This demographic breakdown not only contextualizes the findings but also highlights the diversity of the respondents, contributing to a nuanced understanding of the data. Following this, the chapter progresses into a descriptive analysis for each segment. The study meticulously interprets mean scores and standard deviations, translating these into meaningful insights that reflect the attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors of Malaysian churchgoers regarding various aspects of church engagement. This detailed analysis, combined with the solid groundwork of reliability and demographic assessments, makes this chapter a critical component in unraveling the complexities of church engagement and commitment strategies in the Malaysian



context.

4.2 Reliability Statistics

Engagement Strategies

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.891	10

In the 'Engagement Strategies' component of the study, the reliability statistics indicate a high level of internal consistency, as evidenced by a Cronbach's Alpha value of .891. This score, derived from a set of 10 items, suggests that the survey questions related to engagement strategies are reliably measuring the same underlying construct, providing a robust basis for analyzing respondents' attitudes and perceptions in this area.

Impact of Relevance

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.917	10

The reliability statistics for the 'Impact of Relevance' section of the study demonstrate a notably high degree of internal consistency, as reflected by a Cronbach's Alpha value of .917. This impressive score, calculated from a set of 10 items, robustly indicates that the survey questions in this segment are cohesive and consistently capture the participants' perceptions regarding the relevance of church activities in their lives.



## Commitment to Ministry

### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.934	10

The 'Commitment to Ministry' section of the survey demonstrates an exceptionally high level of internal consistency, as indicated by a Cronbach's Alpha value of .934. This value, calculated from a total of 10 items, strongly suggests that the questions are highly reliable in measuring the nuances of participants' commitment levels to church ministry roles and responsibilities.

## Faith Integration and Spiritual Growth

### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.909	10

The reliability statistics for the 'Faith Integration and Spiritual Growth' aspect of the study reveal a robust Cronbach's Alpha value of .909, indicating a high degree of internal consistency among the 10 items in this section. This strong alpha value underscores the reliability of the survey questions in effectively capturing the intricacies of how church activities intertwine with and influence the personal spiritual growth of the respondents.

## Practical Recommendations

### Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.942	10

In the 'Practical Recommendations' segment of the survey, the reliability



statistics are particularly noteworthy, with a Cronbach's Alpha value of .942. This impressive figure, derived from 10 carefully curated items, signifies a very high level of internal consistency, ensuring that the survey reliably captures participants' perspectives on potential improvements and actionable strategies for church engagement and activities.

### 4.3 Demographic Analysis

**B1. Gender**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	178	46.4	46.4	46.4
	Female	206	53.6	53.6	100.0
	Total	384	100.0	100.0	

The frequency analysis of the demographic attribute 'Gender' in the study reveals a balanced distribution among the participants, with females comprising 53.6% (206 respondents) and males making up 46.4% (178 respondents) of the total 384 respondents. This near-equal representation of genders, reflected in both the percentage and cumulative percentage, provides a well-rounded perspective, ensuring that the insights and conclusions drawn from the study are informed by a diverse range of experiences and viewpoints from both male and female participants.

**B2. Age**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-24 years old	39	10.2	10.2	10.2
	25-34 years old	103	26.8	26.8	37.0
	35-44 years old	145	37.8	37.8	74.7
	45-54 years old	66	17.2	17.2	91.9
	More than 55 years old	31	8.1	8.1	100.0



Total	384	100.0	100.0
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The frequency analysis of the demographic attribute 'Age' in the study presents a diverse age distribution among the 384 respondents. The largest age group is the 35-44 year-olds, accounting for 37.8% of the total, followed by the 25-34 year-olds at 26.8%. The 18-24 and 45-54 year age groups represent 10.2% and 17.2%, respectively, while those aged more than 55 years constitute the smallest group at 8.1%. This varied age representation highlights the study's ability to capture a wide spectrum of experiences and viewpoints across different life stages, enriching the understanding of church engagement across age demographics.

### B3. Highest Level of Education

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Primary	8	2.1	2.1	2.1
	Secondary	25	6.5	6.5	8.6
	Pre-U or equivalent	139	36.2	36.2	44.8
	Tertiary	175	45.6	45.6	90.4
	Other	37	9.6	9.6	100.0
	Total	384	100.0	100.0	

In the study, the frequency analysis of the 'Highest Level of Education' demographic attribute reveals a significant leaning towards higher education among the 384 respondents. The majority, 45.6%, have attained tertiary education, followed by 36.2% with Pre-University or equivalent qualifications. Those with secondary education make up 6.5%, while a smaller fraction, 2.1%, have primary education. Additionally, 9.6% of participants fall into the 'Other' category, encompassing various forms of non-traditional or vocational education. This distribution underscores a predominantly educated demographic, providing insights into the educational backgrounds of the individuals engaging with church activities and their potential

influence on church involvement and perspectives.

#### B4. Employment Status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Student	36	9.4	9.4	9.4
	Employed	217	56.5	56.5	65.9
	Unemployed	30	7.8	7.8	73.7
	Self-Employed	69	18.0	18.0	91.7
	Retired	32	8.3	8.3	100.0
	Total	384	100.0	100.0	

In the study, the frequency analysis of 'Employment Status' among the participants shows a diverse range of occupational backgrounds. The majority, constituting 56.5%, are employed, followed by 18.0% who are self-employed. Students represent 9.4% of the respondents, indicating active engagement from younger demographics. Those who are unemployed and retired account for 7.8% and 8.3% respectively. This varied representation across different employment statuses offers a comprehensive view of the churchgoing population, encompassing a broad spectrum of professional and life experiences, which may influence their engagement and perspectives in church-related activities.

#### B5. Marital Status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Single	157	40.9	40.9	40.9
	Married	191	49.7	49.7	90.6
	Divorced	12	3.1	3.1	93.8
	Widowed	24	6.3	6.3	100.0
	Total	384	100.0	100.0	

The frequency analysis regarding 'Marital Status' in the study reflects a





diverse range of life stages among the 384 respondents. Nearly half, 49.7%, are married, while singles constitute a significant 40.9%. This is followed by individuals who are widowed (6.3%) and divorced (3.1%). The distribution across different marital statuses provides insight into the varied social and familial contexts of the participants, potentially influencing their involvement and experiences in church activities. This diversity in marital status within the sample offers a comprehensive understanding of church engagement across different personal life situations.

#### B6. Role in the Church

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Regular Member	257	66.9	66.9	66.9
	Volunteer	64	16.7	16.7	83.6
	Ministry Leader	32	8.3	8.3	91.9
	Church Staff	27	7.0	7.0	99.0
	Pastor	4	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	384	100.0	100.0	

The frequency analysis of participants' 'Role in the Church' reveals a varied involvement among the 384 respondents. The majority, 66.9%, identify as regular members, indicating a strong base of general congregation participation in the study. Volunteers, who play a significant role in church activities, make up 16.7% of the sample. Those in leadership positions, including ministry leaders and church staff, comprise 8.3% and 7.0% respectively. Pastors, representing a more specialized role, account for 1.0% of the respondents. This distribution highlights a wide spectrum of involvement levels within the church, from general attendees to those with specific roles, offering a comprehensive view of engagement across different capacities in the church community.



### B7. Geographical Location

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Urban	236	61.5	61.5	61.5
	Suburban	128	33.3	33.3	94.8
	Rural	20	5.2	5.2	100.0
	Total	384	100.0	100.0	

The demographic attribute 'Geographical Location' in the study presents a predominantly urban-centric participant profile, with 61.5% (236 respondents) residing in urban areas. Suburban dwellers follow at 33.3% (128 respondents), while those living in rural areas constitute a smaller fraction of the sample at 5.2% (20 respondents). This distribution indicates a significant urban influence in the survey responses, potentially reflecting the distinct church engagement experiences and perspectives prevalent in different geographical settings.

### B8. Number of Individuals in Household

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	28	7.3	7.3	7.3
	2	165	43.0	43.0	50.3
	3	134	34.9	34.9	85.2
	4	46	12.0	12.0	97.1
	More than 4	11	2.9	2.9	100.0
	Total	384	100.0	100.0	

In the survey, the 'Number of Individuals in Household' demographic attribute sheds light on the household composition of the 384 participants. A significant portion, 43.0%, live in households with two individuals, followed by those in three-person households, representing 34.9%. Smaller and larger households are less common, with 12.0% residing in four-person households and a mere 2.9% in households with more than four individuals. Single-person households account for 7.3% of the sample. This range in household sizes offers insights into the diverse

living arrangements of the respondents, which could influence their engagement and participation in church activities.

#### B9. Frequency of visiting church in a Month

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	4	1.0	1.0	1.0
	3	4	1.0	1.0	2.1
	4	262	68.2	68.2	70.3
	5	19	4.9	4.9	75.3
	6	8	2.1	2.1	77.3
	7	8	2.1	2.1	79.4
	8	44	11.5	11.5	90.9
	9	4	1.0	1.0	91.9
	12	4	1.0	1.0	93.0
	18	4	1.0	1.0	94.0
	20	7	1.8	1.8	95.8
	22	8	2.1	2.1	97.9
	23	4	1.0	1.0	99.0
	24	4	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	384	100.0	100.0	

The demographic attribute 'Frequency of visiting church in a Month' in the study highlights the varying levels of church attendance among the 384 respondents. A significant majority, 68.2%, report attending church four times a month, indicating a strong, regular engagement with their church communities. The data also reveal a diversity in attendance patterns, with 11.5% attending eight times a month and smaller percentages ranging from minimal attendance (1.0% attending twice a month) to more frequent attendance (2.1% attending as many as 22 times a month). This variety in church visit frequency underscores the diverse nature of engagement and commitment levels among the participants, reflecting the range of involvement in church activities.



## 4.4 Engagement Strategies

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
C1. I feel actively engaged during worship services at my church.	384	4	5	4.72	.451
C2. Social events at my church effectively foster a sense of community.	384	4	5	4.53	.500
C3. I regularly participate in community outreach programs organized by my church.	384	4	5	4.62	.486
C4. Digital platforms used by my church enhance my engagement.	384	4	5	4.62	.486
C5. The church's activities cater to my spiritual needs.	384	4	5	4.63	.484
C6. I feel that worship services are relevant to my personal life.	384	3	5	4.52	.564
C7. My church offers varied activities that appeal to different age groups.	384	4	5	4.63	.484
C8. I am satisfied with the level of communication from church leadership regarding activities.	384	4	5	4.60	.491
C9. Church activities encourage me to invite friends and family to attend.	384	4	5	4.61	.489
C10. I am aware of all the activities and programs my church offers.	384	3	5	4.52	.559
Valid N (listwise)	384				

The descriptive analysis of 'Engagement Strategies' in the study offers insightful revelations about the churchgoers' experiences and perceptions. The data,

with a respondent count of 384, presents a compelling picture of active engagement and satisfaction among the participants.

A significant finding is the high mean score (4.72) for the item, "I feel actively engaged during worship services at my church," with a relatively low standard deviation of .451. This suggests a strong and consistent sense of engagement among most respondents during worship services, indicating that these services are effectively meeting the spiritual and communal needs of the congregants.

Similarly, social events at churches appear to be successful in fostering community, as evidenced by the mean score of 4.53. The slightly higher standard deviation (.500) compared to worship services might indicate some variability in how these events are perceived by different churchgoers, possibly reflecting variations in event styles or personal preferences.

The active participation in community outreach programs, reflected in a mean of 4.62, underscores a significant level of commitment among the respondents to church-led community initiatives. This is further supported by a relatively tight standard deviation (.486), indicating that this commitment is a consistent trait across the respondent group.

The integration of digital platforms in church activities, which has a mean score of 4.62, highlights the positive role technology plays in enhancing church

engagement. The standard deviation here (.486) is similar to that of community outreach, suggesting a generally uniform agreement on the effectiveness of digital tools among the churchgoers.

The perception that church activities cater to the spiritual needs of the congregation is strongly affirmed with a mean score of 4.63. This, coupled with a standard deviation of .484, points to a widely held sentiment that churches are succeeding in meeting the spiritual aspirations of their members.

The relevance of worship services to personal life, scoring a mean of 4.52, indicates that the teachings and experiences in these services resonate well with the personal lives of the congregants. The higher standard deviation (.564) here might be indicative of a more personal and subjective interpretation of how church teachings are applied in everyday life.

Respondents also perceive that their churches offer a diverse range of activities appealing to different age groups, as reflected in a mean score of 4.63. This suggests successful attempts by churches to cater to a multi-generational congregation, fostering an inclusive environment for all age groups.

Satisfaction with the level of communication from church leadership (mean of 4.60) indicates effective and clear communication strategies within churches. The standard deviation of .491, though slightly higher, still points towards a general

consensus in this area.

The encouragement to invite friends and family to attend church activities, with a mean of 4.61, shows the congregants' positive perception and willingness to share their church experiences with others, highlighting the outreach potential of current churchgoers.

Lastly, awareness of the activities and programs offered by churches scores a mean of 4.52. While the standard deviation (.559) is a bit higher, it still signifies that most church members are well-informed about their church's offerings, although there may be room for improvement in communication or engagement strategies.

In summary, the data analysis of engagement strategies reveals a strong and consistent level of engagement, satisfaction, and commitment among the churchgoers across various aspects of church life. The relatively low standard deviations across most items further strengthen the conclusion that these sentiments are broadly shared among the study's participants.



## 4.5 Impact on Relevance

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
D1. My involvement in church activities has positively impacted my faith journey.	384	3	5	3.93	.647
D2. Church activities help me understand my faith better.	384	3	5	3.87	.440
D3. I find that church teachings are applicable to everyday life.	384	3	5	3.92	.442
D4. Participation in church activities has deepened my understanding of religious teachings.	384	3	5	4.03	.662
D5. Being involved in church makes me feel more connected to my community.	384	3	5	3.99	.600
D6. I often reflect on the teachings I receive at church.	384	3	5	3.80	.574
D7. Church activities provide me with spiritual guidance.	384	3	5	3.78	.584
D8. My participation in church activities enriches my personal life.	384	3	5	3.90	.461
D9. Church involvement has strengthened my commitment to my faith.	384	2	5	3.86	.554
D10. I feel motivated to learn more about my faith through church activities.	384	2	5	3.90	.688
Valid N (listwise)	384				

The descriptive analysis of 'Impact on Relevance' in the study, encompassing responses from 384 individuals, paints a picture of how church activities influence participants' faith and daily life. The analysis focuses primarily on the mean scores



of the responses, with a secondary glance at standard deviations to gauge the variability in perceptions among the respondents.

The first item, assessing the impact of church involvement on individuals' faith journey, shows a positive trend with a mean score of 3.93. This score, although not the highest, coupled with a standard deviation of .647, suggests that while most participants feel their faith journey is positively impacted, there is some variability in this perception.

Participants' understanding of their faith, as influenced by church activities, scores a mean of 3.87. The relatively lower standard deviation of .440 indicates a more consistent agreement among respondents. This implies that church activities are generally effective in enhancing understanding of faith, albeit with some room for improvement.

The applicability of church teachings to everyday life, with a mean of 3.92 and a standard deviation of .442, reflects that the teachings are somewhat relevant to daily living for most respondents. This relevance is crucial for the integration of faith into the practical aspects of life.

The mean score of 4.03 for deepening understanding of religious teachings through church participation is notable. The slightly higher standard deviation of .662 might suggest varying degrees of how significantly different individuals feel their

understanding is deepened, possibly due to different levels of prior knowledge or engagement.

Feeling more connected to the community through church involvement, scoring 3.99, is a significant indicator of the social impact of church activities. The standard deviation of .600 points to some differences in how strongly different individuals feel this connection.

Reflecting on church teachings, with a mean of 3.80, underscores that participants generally ponder over what they learn, though the standard deviation of .574 suggests varying degrees of reflection among them.

The provision of spiritual guidance by church activities, scoring a mean of 3.78, indicates a positive, yet slightly varied, perception (standard deviation of .584) of the role of church in guiding spiritual life.

The enrichment of personal life through church participation, with a mean of 3.90, indicates a positive impact, albeit with some variation among individuals (standard deviation of .461). This suggests that while church involvement enhances personal life for many, the degree to which it does so can differ.

Strengthened commitment to faith due to church involvement scores a mean

of 3.86. The standard deviation of .554 suggests a moderate spread in responses, indicating that while many feel more committed, the extent of this impact varies.

Lastly, the motivation to learn more about faith through church activities, with a mean of 3.90 and a higher standard deviation of .688, indicates that while church activities generally motivate learning, there is considerable variability in how strongly different participants feel this motivation.

In summary, the 'Impact on Relevance' section reveals that church activities generally have a positive impact on participants' faith journey, understanding of faith, and application of teachings in daily life. While the mean scores are consistently above the mid-point, indicating overall positive perceptions, the standard deviations reveal a range in the strength of these perceptions, suggesting that experiences and impacts are not uniform across all participants.

## 4.6 Commitment to Ministry

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
E1. I am actively involved in at least one ministry at my church.	384	1	4	2.64	.643
E2. I feel a sense of responsibility towards my church community.	384	1	4	2.85	.555
E3. Contributing to church activities is a priority for me.	384	1	4	2.59	.594



E4. I see myself taking on more active roles in church in the future.	384	1	4	2.82	.663
E5. I am committed to attending church regularly.	384	1	4	2.57	.630
E6. Supporting church initiatives is important to me.	384	1	4	2.88	.662
E7. I willingly volunteer for church events and activities.	384	1	4	2.67	.668
E8. Being part of church ministries gives me a sense of fulfillment.	384	1	4	2.70	.659
E9. I encourage others to participate more actively in church.	384	1	4	2.84	.555
E10. My involvement in church ministries impacts my spiritual growth.	384	1	4	2.60	.613
Valid N (listwise)	384				

The descriptive analysis of the 'Commitment to Ministry' section in the study, encompassing responses from 384 participants, offers a nuanced view of the congregation's involvement and dedication to their church's ministries. Each item is evaluated based on its mean score and standard deviation, reflecting the collective attitudes and behaviors of the churchgoers.

The first item, focusing on active involvement in church ministries, yields a mean score of 2.64, suggesting a moderate level of participation among the respondents. The standard deviation of .643 indicates some variability, showing that while some participants are deeply involved, others may be less so.

The sense of responsibility towards the church community, with a mean of

2.85, indicates a fairly strong feeling of obligation among the members. The standard deviation of .555 suggests a reasonably consistent sense of responsibility across the sample.

Regarding prioritizing contributions to church activities, the mean score of 2.59 points to a moderate prioritization level. The standard deviation of .594 reflects a range of attitudes towards this commitment, with some participants likely viewing it as more crucial than others.

The prospect of taking on more active roles in the future is met with a mean score of 2.82, revealing a positive inclination towards increased involvement. However, the standard deviation of .663 implies differing levels of readiness among participants to step into more prominent roles.

Regular church attendance, scoring a mean of 2.57, shows a moderate commitment. The standard deviation of .630 indicates varied attendance patterns, suggesting differences in how individuals prioritize regular church participation.

The importance of supporting church initiatives scores a mean of 2.88. This relatively high score, with a standard deviation of .662, indicates that while supporting church initiatives is generally seen as important, there are differing degrees of this sentiment among the congregation.

Willingness to volunteer for church events and activities, with a mean of 2.67 and a standard deviation of .668, shows a moderate level of volunteerism, but with significant variation in willingness across the sample.

Finding fulfillment in being part of church ministries is indicated by a mean score of 2.70. The relatively high standard deviation of .659 suggests that while many find fulfillment, the degree to which this is experienced varies.

Encouraging others to participate more actively in church shows a mean score of 2.84. The standard deviation of .555 reveals a relatively consistent trend among participants in promoting active involvement in the church.

Finally, the impact of ministry involvement on spiritual growth, with a mean of 2.60 and a standard deviation of .613, indicates a moderate influence. This variation in scores suggests differing perceptions of how ministry involvement contributes to personal spiritual development.

Overall, the 'Commitment to Ministry' analysis reveals a congregation engaged at varying levels in their church's ministries. While there is a general trend towards involvement and a sense of responsibility, the range of standard deviations across these items highlights the diversity in commitment levels, suggesting that while some members are highly involved and find significant fulfillment in their roles, others may engage more passively or are exploring their involvement levels.



## 4.7 Faith Integration and Spiritual Growth

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
F1. My involvement in church activities complements my personal spiritual practices.	384	3	4	3.14	.343
F2. I often experience personal spiritual growth through church-related activities.	384	3	4	3.30	.457
F3. My faith is an integral part of my daily life.	384	2	4	3.26	.538
F4. Church teachings have influenced my personal values and beliefs.	384	3	4	3.26	.441
F5. Participation in church activities has led to meaningful spiritual experiences.	384	3	4	3.35	.478
F6. I feel my personal spirituality is aligned with the teachings of my church.	384	3	4	3.40	.491
F7. Engaging in church activities has deepened my prayer life.	384	3	4	3.30	.459
F8. I feel spiritually supported by my church community.	384	3	4	3.26	.437
F9. I actively seek opportunities for spiritual growth within my church.	384	3	4	3.20	.397
F10. My involvement in church activities has strengthened my personal relationship with God.	384	3	4	3.38	.487
Valid N (listwise)	384				

The analysis of 'Faith Integration and Spiritual Growth' in the study, with

responses from 384 participants, provides insightful perspectives on how church involvement intertwines with personal spirituality. Each item's mean score and standard deviation offer a glimpse into the congregation's spiritual experiences and growth through church activities.

The first item, regarding the complementarity of church activities with personal spiritual practices, scores a mean of 3.14. The relatively low standard deviation of .343 suggests a consistent agreement among participants that their involvement in church activities harmonizes well with their personal spiritual routines.

For personal spiritual growth through church-related activities, the mean score of 3.30 indicates a positive trend. The standard deviation of .457, while moderate, points to a generally shared experience of spiritual development among the respondents.

The integration of faith in daily life, scoring a mean of 3.26, suggests that for most respondents, faith plays a significant role in their everyday existence. The standard deviation of .538 implies some variation in how deeply faith permeates the daily lives of different individuals.

The influence of church teachings on personal values and beliefs, also scoring a mean of 3.26, indicates that the teachings have a considerable impact on shaping personal ethics and principles. The standard deviation of .441 reflects a relative



consistency in this influence across the sample.

Participants report meaningful spiritual experiences through church participation, with a mean of 3.35. This score points to a positive correlation between active church involvement and the experience of spiritually significant moments, as indicated by the standard deviation of .478.

The alignment of personal spirituality with church teachings, scoring a mean of 3.40, suggests a strong congruence for many respondents. The standard deviation of .491 indicates that this alignment is generally felt across the board, though to varying extents.

The deepening of prayer life through engagement in church activities, with a mean of 3.30, highlights the role of church involvement in enhancing participants' prayer practices. The standard deviation of .459 suggests a shared experience in this aspect, though the depth of impact varies among individuals.

Feeling spiritually supported by the church community, scoring a mean of 3.26, reflects a sense of spiritual kinship and support within the church. The standard deviation of .437 indicates a fairly uniform perception of this support among respondents.



The active pursuit of opportunities for spiritual growth within the church is indicated by a mean of 3.20. The standard deviation of .397 suggests that while participants generally seek such opportunities, the level of proactive engagement varies.

Lastly, the strengthening of personal relationships with God through church involvement, with a mean of 3.38, suggests that church activities significantly impact participants' spiritual connections. The standard deviation of .487 indicates a common trend, albeit with individual variations in the strength of this impact.

In conclusion, the 'Faith Integration and Spiritual Growth' analysis reveals a congregation that largely perceives their church involvement as beneficial to their spiritual life. While the mean scores indicate positive trends in spiritual growth and integration, the standard deviations point to a spectrum of experiences and intensities in these aspects, reflecting the individualized nature of spiritual journeys within the church community.

## 4.8 Practical Recommendations

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
G1. I would be more involved if my church offered a wider variety of educational and spiritual growth opportunities.	384	3	5	4.29	.530

G2. My church should invest more in engaging and relevant programs for youth and children.	384	3	5	4.26	.579
G3. I feel that providing support for personal and family challenges should be a priority for my church.	384	3	5	4.41	.561
G4. Increased involvement in outreach and community service projects would enhance my engagement with the church.	384	3	5	4.31	.536
G5. My church could benefit from implementing mentorship and discipleship programs.	384	3	5	4.35	.549
G6. Regular updates and clear communication from church leadership about activities and decisions would improve my experience.	384	3	5	4.32	.541
G7. Incorporating more contemporary music and creative arts in services would increase my engagement.	384	3	5	4.39	.558
G8. I would be more engaged if there were more opportunities for small group gatherings and discussions.	384	3	5	4.33	.543
G9. Having a variety of volunteer opportunities available would encourage me to be more active in the church.	384	3	5	4.35	.549
G10. Utilizing technology to facilitate remote participation in services and events would help me stay more connected.	384	3	5	4.33	.542



Valid N (listwise)	384				
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The 'Practical Recommendations' section of the study, based on responses from 384 participants, provides crucial insights into potential areas of enhancement for church activities. Each item, analyzed through its mean score and standard deviation, offers a glimpse into what churchgoers believe could further enrich their church experience and engagement.

The suggestion for a wider variety of educational and spiritual growth opportunities (G1) receives a high mean score of 4.29, indicating a strong desire among respondents for more diverse learning avenues. The standard deviation of .530 reflects some variation in this preference, suggesting that while most participants favor such diversity, the extent of this preference varies.

The need for more engaging programs for youth and children (G2) is similarly underscored with a mean of 4.26. The slightly higher standard deviation of .579 indicates varied opinions on how much emphasis should be placed on youth-oriented activities, possibly reflecting differences in respondents' life stages or family situations.

The importance of church support for personal and family challenges (G3) is highlighted by a mean score of 4.41, one of the highest in this section. The standard deviation of .561 suggests a strong consensus on this need, although perceptions of what constitutes effective support may differ among congregants.

Increased involvement in outreach and community service projects (G4) is seen as a key factor in enhancing engagement, with a mean score of 4.31. The standard deviation of .536 indicates a generally shared view on this, though the degree to which such involvement would influence engagement might vary.

The potential benefits of implementing mentorship and discipleship programs (G5) receive a mean score of 4.35, suggesting a notable interest in these types of programs. The standard deviation of .549, however, points to varying degrees of enthusiasm for such initiatives among the respondents.

Regular updates and clear communication from church leadership (G6) are considered crucial, as reflected in a mean score of 4.32. The standard deviation of .541 reveals that while there's a general agreement on the need for better communication, experiences and expectations regarding this may differ.

The incorporation of contemporary music and creative arts in services (G7) is highly regarded (mean of 4.39), indicating a desire for more modern and engaging elements in church services. The standard deviation of .558, however, suggests differing views on how much contemporary content is appropriate or desired.

More opportunities for small group gatherings and discussions (G8) are also seen as beneficial, scoring a mean of 4.33. This reflects a widespread interest in more intimate, community-building activities, with the standard deviation of .543



indicating some variance in how strongly this is felt across the congregation.

The availability of a variety of volunteer opportunities (G9) is valued, as indicated by a mean score of 4.35. The standard deviation of .549 suggests that while there's a general desire for more volunteer options, the types of opportunities sought may differ among individuals.

Finally, utilizing technology for remote participation (G10) is seen as a way to stay more connected, with a mean score of 4.33. The standard deviation of .542 suggests that while many see the benefits of technology in maintaining connection, there's some variability in the extent to which individuals value or rely on such technological solutions.

In summary, the 'Practical Recommendations' analysis reveals a congregation eager for more diversity in educational and spiritual offerings, greater support for personal and familial challenges, and enhanced opportunities for community involvement and technological engagement. The variations in standard deviations across these items highlight a range of preferences and priorities among the churchgoers, underscoring the need for churches to consider a multifaceted approach to cater to their diverse congregations.



## Chapter 5

### Conclusion and Recommendations

#### 5.1 Chapter Introduction

Chapter 5 stands as the concluding segment of this study, skillfully tying together the diverse strands of discoveries, their broader ramifications, pragmatic suggestions, and potential paths for future scholarly inquiry. It commences by concisely recapping the pivotal findings unearthed from the in-depth analysis earlier in the study, laying the groundwork for what follows. This thoughtful consideration leads to the formulation of a set of targeted recommendations, crafted to effectively address the specific needs and challenges identified through the research. Looking ahead, the chapter also proposes areas ripe for future exploration, highlighting the untapped potential and avenues that could further enrich our understanding in this domain. Concluding the chapter, a reflective synthesis not only encapsulates the essence and contributions of the study but also offers a moment of introspection on its wider significance, bringing to a close this insightful journey into the realm of church engagement and ministry.

#### 5.2 Findings

##### 5.2.1 Findings of Engagement Strategies

The research findings on 'Engagement Strategies' in the context of churchgoers' experiences and perceptions resonate intriguingly with the insights gleaned from the literature review, particularly when considering the historical



context and various theories of religious engagement and commitment. The high mean scores across various engagement aspects in the study can be seen as a contemporary manifestation of the historical evolution of church engagement. For instance, the strong engagement during worship services, with a mean score of 4.72, echoes the foundational principles established in the early Christian communities, as highlighted by Allen & Lawton (2012), where church activities were integral to daily existence and communal interactions.

Similarly, the effective role of social events in fostering community (mean score of 4.53) aligns with Durkheim's perspective on religion fostering social cohesion, as discussed by Myszal (2003). This reflects the enduring importance of communal nature in religious participation, a facet that has been a cornerstone since the Middle Ages, as noted in the literature (Gorski, 2000). The respondents' active participation in community outreach programs, with a mean score of 4.62, further exemplifies this communal dimension, underpinning the church's role as a social influencer and a hub for community engagement.

The integration of digital platforms in church activities, receiving a similar mean score of 4.62, marks a significant evolution from the historical contexts, adapting to the modern era's technological advancements as discussed by Crumpton (2018). This adaptation reflects the church's responsiveness to contemporary societal shifts, a theme recurrent in the literature review's examination of the church's journey through different eras, including the Renaissance and Enlightenment periods where individualism and scientific progress began to reshape church engagement (Wood, 2012).



Furthermore, the perception that church activities cater to spiritual needs (mean score of 4.63) and the relevance of worship services to personal life (mean score of 4.52) resonate with the Identity Theory of Religious Involvement (Ysseldyk, Matheson & Anisman, 2010). This theory's focus on religious practices shaping personal identity and narrative aligns with respondents feeling that church activities are relevant and cater to their spiritual journey, indicating an intertwined relationship between personal faith narratives and church engagement.

Additionally, the study's findings on varying levels of engagement and satisfaction across different age groups (mean score of 4.63 for diverse activities appealing to different age groups) correlate with the Social Learning Theory (O'Connor, Hoge & Alexander, 2020). This theory emphasizes the influence of early socialization and immediate social environment in shaping religious behaviors, suggesting that church engagement strategies need to be diverse and adaptable to cater to different generational needs and backgrounds.

In summary, the research findings offer a contemporary reflection of the theoretical and historical narratives explored in the literature review. The high engagement scores across different aspects of church life demonstrate the church's ability to maintain its relevance and adapt to the evolving needs of its congregation. This adaptation is a testament to the enduring principles of communal engagement, personal identity, and spiritual fulfillment that have historically underpinned church activities, as well as the church's capacity to evolve in response to societal changes.

### 5.2.2 Findings of Impact of Relevance

The research finding on the 'Impact on Relevance' when juxtaposed with the



literature review on the 'Impact of Societal Changes on Church Participation' offers a comprehensive understanding of how contemporary societal shifts influence individual engagement and faith experiences within the church context. The positive trends observed in the study, such as the impact of church involvement on individuals' faith journey (mean score of 3.93), and the applicability of church teachings to everyday life (mean score of 3.92), reflect an evolving church engagement dynamic that resonates with the changing societal and cultural landscapes discussed in the literature.

The literature review, particularly focusing on the secularization in society (Davie, Woodhead & Catto, 2016), suggests a growing juxtaposition between secular ideologies and traditional religious practices. This is mirrored in the research finding where participants indicate a moderate to high level of applicability of church teachings in their daily lives, suggesting a nuanced integration of faith within a secularized context. Moreover, the demographic shifts and urbanization (Rogers et al., 2020) highlighted in the literature review correlate with the study's findings on the diversification of church activities. This is evident in the respondents' perception of their churches offering activities that appeal to different age groups (mean score of 4.63), implying an adaptive response to the diverse, urban congregation.

Cultural transformations, as explored in the literature (Jacobsen, 2012), underscore the need for churches to navigate the cultural confluence impacting church participation. This aligns with the study's finding on the enrichment of personal life through church participation (mean score of 3.90), indicating that churches are somewhat successfully integrating cultural inclusivity within their

activities, thus enriching the personal lives of congregants.

The research findings also reflect the implications of technological advancements discussed in the literature (Campbell & Vitullo, 2016). The integration of digital platforms in church activities, which received a positive response in the study (mean score of 4.62), illustrates how churches are adapting to the digital era, aligning with the literature's observation of churches embracing digital means for engagement.

Furthermore, the study's finding on varied perceptions about the provision of spiritual guidance by church activities (mean score of 3.78) can be related to the individualism emphasized in the literature (Lee, 2013). This suggests that churches are addressing individual spiritual needs within a collective setting, albeit with room for improvement, reflecting the need for a balance between personal faith narratives and communal church experiences.

In summary, the study's findings on the 'Impact on Relevance' offer empirical evidence that supports and extends the theoretical and contextual insights provided in the literature review. The research illustrates how churches are actively responding to the multifaceted challenges posed by societal changes, including secularization, demographic shifts, cultural transformations, and technological advancements. While the positive trends in church engagement strategies are evident, the variability in perceptions among respondents underscores the ongoing need for churches to adapt and evolve in their approaches to meet the diverse needs of their congregations effectively.

### 5.2.3 Findings of Commitment to Ministry

The research findings from the 'Commitment to Ministry' section, when critically evaluated against the backdrop of the literature review on 'Psychology of Religious Commitment,' present a compelling narrative about the dynamics of church engagement from a psychological perspective. The moderate levels of active involvement in church ministries, as indicated by the mean score of 2.64 and the variability shown by the standard deviation, mirror the complex interplay between personal drives and societal influences discussed in the literature. This variability could be a reflection of the diverse ways individuals integrate their religious practices with their self-concept and life perspective, as suggested by Lim & Putnam (2010).

The fairly strong sense of responsibility towards the church community, with a mean of 2.85, aligns with Ellison & George's (1994) observation of the church functioning as a social support network that fosters a shared purpose and collective identity. This finding underscores the role of communal dynamics in reinforcing commitment to the church, resonating with the literature's emphasis on the social aspects of religious participation.

The moderate prioritization of contributions to church activities, as reflected in the mean score of 2.59, and the diversity in commitment levels highlighted by the standard deviations across various items, can be viewed through the lens of the psychological compensation theory discussed in the literature review. The varying degrees of commitment might be indicative of how individuals seek emotional and



psychological fulfillment through their church involvement, as proposed by Skinner & Wellborn (2019).

Furthermore, the positive inclination towards taking on more active roles in the future, with a mean score of 2.82, and the moderate influence of ministry involvement on spiritual growth, with a mean of 2.60, could be indicative of the identity theory of religious involvement. This theory, as explored in the literature, suggests that religious commitment can be an integral part of one's personal narrative, influencing life choices and personal development (Ysseldyk, Matheson & Anisman, 2010). The willingness to volunteer and find fulfillment in church ministries, reflected in the mean scores of 2.67 and 2.70 respectively, align with this theory, suggesting that for many, church involvement is closely tied to their sense of identity and fulfillment.

The research findings also resonate with the literature's exploration of personal spiritual experiences and their impact on religious commitment. The encouragement to participate more actively in church, scoring a mean of 2.84, might reflect the influence of profound religious insights or transcendental experiences, as highlighted by Lee, Poloma & Post (2013).

In summary, the research findings on 'Commitment to Ministry' provide empirical substantiation to the theoretical frameworks explored in the literature review. The findings illustrate a spectrum of engagement levels and motivations among churchgoers, reflecting the multifaceted psychological factors that shape religious commitment. While the congregation exhibits a general trend towards

involvement and a sense of responsibility, the diversity in commitment levels underscores the influence of individual psychological needs, identity formation, social dynamics, and personal spiritual experiences on their engagement in church life. This critical evaluation highlights the importance of considering these psychological aspects when devising strategies to enhance and sustain active participation and commitment in church ministries.

#### 5.2.4 Findings of Faith Integration and Spiritual Growth

The 'Faith Integration and Spiritual Growth' findings from the study, when critically evaluated against the literature on the same topic, offer a rich, multifaceted understanding of how church involvement shapes personal spirituality. The positive trends observed in the study, such as the complementarity of church activities with personal spiritual practices (mean score of 3.14), and the significant role of faith in daily life (mean score of 3.26), resonate with the insights from the literature review, particularly the transformative power of active church involvement highlighted by Tirres & Schikore (2020). This congruence suggests that active participation in church life, more than just attendance, is crucial for deepening personal spiritual connections, a notion that is strongly supported by the study's findings.

The literature review's emphasis on the transformative potential of individual spiritual experiences within the church context (Gallagher & Newton, 2009) is reflected in the study's finding that participants report meaningful spiritual experiences through church participation (mean score of 3.35). This correlation underscores the role of church activities in facilitating moments of spiritual insight and awakening, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of personal faith.



The findings of the study also align with the literature's exploration of communal experiences in church settings and their impact on personal spirituality. The sense of spiritual kinship and support within the church community, as indicated by a mean score of 3.26, mirrors the literature's recognition of the profound influence of shared experiences and collective wisdom in church communities on individual spiritual journeys.

Additionally, the study's finding on the alignment of personal spirituality with church teachings (mean score of 3.40) and the active pursuit of opportunities for spiritual growth within the church (mean score of 3.20) resonates with the literature's discussion on the challenges and complexities of integrating faith into personal life (Crossman, 2016). These findings suggest that while individuals generally seek to align their spirituality with church teachings and actively engage in opportunities for growth, there is variability in the extent and nature of this alignment and engagement.

The moderate scores and standard deviations across various items in the study highlight the individualized nature of spiritual journeys within the church community. This variability supports the literature's view of the personalized nature of faith development and the unique ways in which individuals experience and integrate their spirituality with church activities.

In conclusion, the research findings on 'Faith Integration and Spiritual Growth' provide empirical evidence that complements and expands upon the theoretical perspectives presented in the literature review. The study illustrates the multifaceted



nature of spiritual growth within the church context, emphasizing the importance of active participation, individual spiritual experiences, communal dynamics, and the personal integration of faith. These findings offer valuable insights into the complex processes of spiritual growth and faith development within the church community, affirming the theoretical frameworks discussed in the literature.

#### 5.2.5 Findings of Practical Recommendations

The 'Practical Recommendations' findings of the study provide a detailed snapshot of the congregation's aspirations for church activities, which, when compared with the themes explored in the related literature, reveal a compelling narrative of evolving church engagement in modern times.

The high mean score (4.29) for desiring a wider variety of educational and spiritual growth opportunities reflects a growing trend in contemporary religious communities. This desire aligns with the literature that underscores the evolving needs of congregations, emphasizing the importance of diverse and adaptive spiritual education formats to cater to a broad spectrum of learners (Lee, 2013). The standard deviation suggests a range in the intensity of this preference, indicative of the varied spiritual backgrounds and educational needs within the church.

Similarly, the emphasis on engaging programs for youth and children, reflected in the mean score of 4.26, resonates with literature emphasizing the importance of youth engagement in faith communities (Shaw, et al., 2014). The slightly higher standard deviation may indicate differing perspectives based on





demographic factors such as age and family status, echoing the literature's call for age-appropriate and relatable content in church programs.

The notable consensus on the importance of church support for personal and family challenges (mean score of 4.41) echoes recent studies highlighting the increasing role of faith communities in providing holistic support to their members (Malone & Dadswell, 2018). The variation in perceptions of what constitutes effective support might stem from the diverse personal and familial circumstances faced by congregants.

The congregation's view on increased involvement in outreach and community service (mean score of 4.31) aligns with the literature that advocates for churches to be actively involved in community development and social issues, thereby enhancing church engagement and relevance (Bhattacharyya, 2020). The standard deviation indicates varied opinions on the extent of this involvement, suggesting differing personal commitments or understandings of community service.

The interest in mentorship and discipleship programs (mean score of 4.35) is consistent with literature stressing the importance of personal guidance and spiritual mentorship in churches (Newkirk & Cooper, 2013). The variability in enthusiasm could be attributed to individual differences in spiritual maturity or past experiences with such programs.

Regular communication from church leadership, as reflected in the mean

score of 4.32, is crucial in today's context where congregants seek transparency and consistent updates. This finding is in line with literature emphasizing effective communication as key to maintaining congregational trust and engagement (DeYmaz, 2020).

The desire for contemporary music and creative arts in services (mean of 4.39) reflects a trend in modern worship practices, which the literature identifies as a means to attract and retain a diverse congregation, particularly younger members (Porter, 2016). The standard deviation suggests a balance between traditional and contemporary elements may be necessary to cater to varied preferences.

The perceived benefits of small group gatherings and discussions (mean score of 4.33) underscore the literature's emphasis on intimate, community-building activities within churches, seen as vital for fostering deeper relationships and spiritual growth (Frazee, 2013).

The value placed on a variety of volunteer opportunities (mean score of 4.35) and the use of technology for remote participation (mean score of 4.33) align with contemporary trends in church engagement. Literature suggests that volunteerism can enhance personal involvement and commitment (Stukas, Snyder & Clary, 2016), while technological integration is increasingly recognized as essential in maintaining connection and accessibility, especially post-pandemic (Shah, et al., 2020).

In conclusion, the 'Practical Recommendations' findings reveal a congregation that is actively seeking more diverse, engaging, and supportive church experiences. These desires align with current literature on church engagement, emphasizing the need for adaptive, multifaceted approaches in modern church practices. This alignment suggests that churches that are attentive to these evolving preferences are likely to see enhanced involvement and spiritual growth within their congregations.

### 5.3 Recommendations

In reenvisioning the church's role in the modern landscape, a dynamic and inclusive approach is paramount. As the fabric of congregations changes, so too should our worship methodologies. This involves a beautiful melding of the old and the new - imagine the rich, reverberating chords of traditional hymns interlacing with the vibrant beats of contemporary tunes. This harmonious blend not only bridges the age divide but also crafts a worship experience that resonates with a wider audience, touching hearts across generations.

Beyond the church walls, there lies a vital role for the church in the tapestry of community life. Moving past traditional religious confines, there's an urgent call for churches to immerse themselves in community development and social advocacy. Such proactive involvement, which could range from local volunteering initiatives to championing social justice causes, does more than just elevate the church's societal relevance. It also provides a profound sense of purpose and connection for its members, fostering a deeper sense of community.

At the core of any thriving community is communication, and this is especially true for a church congregation. The essence of building and sustaining trust with congregants lies in open, sincere, and consistent communication. This could manifest in various forms, from digital newsletters and social media outreach to heartfelt, face-to-face conversations. The crux is to create an environment where everyone feels listened to and valued. Small group discussions, in particular, offer a nurturing space for individuals to voice their thoughts and experiences, reinforcing a sense of belonging and community.

In today's digitally interconnected world, and particularly in the aftermath of the pandemic, the church's digital presence has transitioned from a convenience to a necessity. This encompasses more than just online services; it's about forging an engaging online community. A space where congregants can gather, share, and grow in their faith journey, irrespective of physical barriers. This digital embrace ensures that the church remains a supportive and accessible pillar, regardless of geographical or personal constraints.

At the heart of the church is its sense of community. Cultivating warm, supportive relationships within the church is crucial. This could involve organizing intimate gatherings, spiritual retreats, or casual social events. Such initiatives create a haven for members to form meaningful connections, share their life journeys, and grow together in faith. These personal, heartfelt interactions are the foundation of a robust and spirited church community.

By incorporating these strategies, churches can not only cater to the diverse needs of their congregations but also ensure their continued relevance and nurturing

presence in the lives of their members. It's about creating a welcoming space where every individual feels valued, connected, and part of a larger, caring family.

#### 5.4 Suggestions for Future Research

In advancing our understanding of church engagement and spirituality, future research should delve into the varied experiences across different demographic groups. Such studies could examine how age, gender, socioeconomic background, and cultural diversity shape individuals' engagement with church activities. There's also a rich opportunity in longitudinal research that could trace the evolution of personal spirituality and commitment to the church over extended periods.

Equally important is the exploration of the ever-increasing role of digital technology in religious practices. Future studies could assess the long-term implications of online worship services, social media's role in faith communities, and the effectiveness of digital platforms for religious education. On a more personal level, investigating the psychological drivers behind church participation, including aspects of identity, emotional wellness, and the influence of social dynamics, could offer deeper insights into why people engage with their faith communities in the ways they do.

Another promising area for exploration lies in comparing various church engagement strategies. By assessing the effectiveness of different worship styles, outreach programs, and educational initiatives, researchers can provide valuable insights into what works best for congregational growth and individual spiritual

development. Moreover, examining how churches are responding to pressing social issues, from advocating for racial justice to addressing environmental concerns, could shed light on the church's role in modern social activism.

Investigating the impact of mentorship and discipleship programs could provide a clearer picture of how these initiatives support individual spiritual journeys and community cohesion within the church. In addition, there's a need for research on how churches are supporting their members through personal and family challenges, be it mental health struggles, relationship difficulties, or financial hardships.

Exploring emerging trends in church participation, such as house churches or faith-based community service projects, could reveal alternative and innovative models of church engagement appealing to a diverse congregation. Finally, incorporating interfaith perspectives in research could enrich our understanding, offering a broader view of how different religious traditions engage their followers.

Through such diverse research endeavors, we can deepen our understanding of the complex dynamics that shape church engagement and spirituality, paving the way for more nuanced and effective approaches to nurturing participation and spiritual growth within church communities.

## 5.5 Conclusion

The research concludes that modern church engagement is intricately woven with historical and psychological underpinnings, reflecting an adaptive evolution to meet contemporary societal changes. The findings underscore the church's enduring ability to fulfill both spiritual and communal needs, echoing foundational principles rooted in early Christian communities. This adaptability is evident in the church's response to societal shifts, integrating digital platforms and diversifying activities to cater to a broad congregation. The study's insights into 'Commitment to Ministry' and 'Faith Integration and Spiritual Growth' reveal a nuanced interplay of personal motivations and societal influences, emphasizing the significance of personal identity and community dynamics in shaping church engagement.

In summary, the study highlights the church's success in maintaining relevance through its historical ability to evolve alongside societal changes. The recommendations from the study stress the importance of multifaceted church approaches, catering to diverse educational, spiritual, and community needs. This adaptability is key to ensuring the church remains a relevant, supportive, and integral part of its congregation's life in a rapidly evolving world. The study concludes with an affirmation of the church's role in fostering a sense of belonging, spiritual growth, and community engagement, calling for continued responsiveness to the evolving needs of churchgoers.



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